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ABSTRACT

This report from the Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) focuses on Head Start implementation in Ohio, describing its growth over the last 8 years, services provided to children and their families, costs, program quality and how it is monitored, and the challenges faced in expansion. After an extensive summary, chapter 1 describes the purpose and methods of the study. Chapter 2 describes Head Start nationally and its operation in Ohio. Chapter 3 outlines the cost of implementing Head Start. Chapter 4 presents challenges to its implementation, focusing on facilities, staffing, collaboration, and monitoring of program quality. Chapter 5 considers the future expansion of Head Start in light of welfare reform, and chapter 6 presents LOEO's conclusions and recommendations for changes in implementing Head Start in Ohio. Findings indicate that Ohio leads the nation in state Head Start funding but provides lower per-child amounts than federal funding. State funding focuses on serving more children rather than on ensuring program quality. The availability of adequate facilities is a major barrier to serving more children, and Head Start programs need to increase their collaboration with day care providers and public schools to meet the demands of welfare reform. The oversight and management of Head Start by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is insufficient for a rapidly expanding program. LOEO recommendations are made in the areas of the state funding process, facilities, collaboration, and ODE oversight. Nine appendices include a selected bibliography and methods of calculating per-child costs. (AA)

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Implementation of Head Start in Ohio

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Columbus, Ohio
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The Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) serves as staff to the Legislative Committee on Education Oversight. Created by the Ohio General Assembly in 1989, the Office evaluates education-related activities funded wholly or in part by the state of Ohio. This LOEO report describes the implementation of Head Start in Ohio in terms of its growth, costs, operation, and oversight. *Conclusions and recommendation in this report are those of the LOEO staff and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Committee or its members.*

Summary

Implementation of Head Start in Ohio

This report is the first of two Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) reports focusing on Head Start. As a result of Ohio's investment in Head Start and the expectation that the program would continue to expand, the Ohio General Assembly required LOEO to study both the implementation and impact of Head Start in Ohio.

Ohio has invested over $300 million in Head Start programs since 1990. In combination with federal funding, over 54,000 Ohio three and four year olds are currently participating in Head Start.

In this report, LOEO focuses on the implementation of Head Start in Ohio with respect to: its growth over the last eight years; the services it provides to children and their families; its costs; the quality of the program and how it is monitored; and the challenges it faces to expand. A second report focusing on the impact of Head Start will be completed in Fall 1997.

Ohio leads the nation in the amount of funding it provides to Head Start. Since 1990, Ohio has invested over $300 million state dollars to supplement the federal Head Start program in Ohio. As a result of the combined state and federal effort, over 54,000 Ohio three and four year olds are currently participating in Head Start, representing an estimated 75% of the eligible population. Nationally, Head Start enrolls 38% of children whose families have incomes at or below the federal poverty level ($15,600 for a family of four).

Ohio has two simultaneous policy goals of helping young children get ready for school and helping their parents become part of the workforce.

Increasing the number of children in Head Start has been an important state strategy for accomplishing the first national education goal -- all children will enter school ready to learn. In recent years, a second policy initiative has affected the same population of children and families in poverty -- welfare reform. In effect, Ohio has two simultaneous policy goals which can either complement or contradict each other: 1) helping young children get ready for school, and 2) helping their parents become part of the workforce.

Head Start Goals and Services

National studies confirm that quality Head Start programs help children enter school ready to learn.

Head Start is a *comprehensive* program whose principal goal is to develop the social competence of children in poverty before they enter school. Although Head Start focuses on teaching children social competence, the education component makes up only 40% of its budget.

In addition to developing the social competence of the child, Head Start provides many services to the family.

Beyond educating children, Head Start provides many services to their families. Parents of Head Start children are linked with social service programs, taught parenting skills, given literacy and job training, and encouraged to participate in policy decisions regarding the program. In addition, Head Start provides health screenings and immunizations, emphasizes the importance of nutrition, and provides services to children with disabilities.

LOEO Findings

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) is responsible for the management and oversight of Head Start programs. Locally, there are 56 grantees who administer the program. Across Ohio, there are approximately 750 Head Start facilities and over 1,600 classrooms where the majority of children receive 3.5 hours of classroom service for 139 days per year.

Ohio' s per- child funding amount of $3,564 is significantly lower than the federal amount of $5,200. LOEO estimates that $4,700 is used to serve a typical Ohio Head Start child and family.

Funding and cost. Ohio leads the nation in the amount of state funding for Head Start, but it provides significantly lower amounts for each child than federal funding. In 1996, the federal government provided $5,200 per child, which includes a required 20% in-kind local match. In contrast, the state's funding per child was $3,564.

All but one of Ohio's grantees receive both federal and state funding. By combining federal ($5,200) and state ($3,564) per-child spending, LOEO estimates that $4,700 is spent to serve a typical Ohio Head Start child and family.

In reality, this $4,700 figure is an *underestimate* of the cost to serve an Ohio Head Start child because the local in-kind contribution often exceeds 20% of the federal dollars. In addition, the $4,700 figure actually masks the variations in cost for each type of program offered, such as part-day, full-day, and home-based options.

State funding for Head Start has expanded from $18 million in fiscal years 1990 and 1991 to $145 million in fiscal years 1996 and 1997, the focus of which has been on serving more children rather than ensuring the quality of the programs.

Expansion and quality. State funding for Head Start has expanded from $18 million in fiscal years 1990 and 1991 to $145 million in fiscal years 1996 and 1997. The focus of these new state Head Start funds has been on a single goal — serving more Head Start eligible children. Currently, grantees must agree to serve an additional child for every $3,500 in expansion funds it receives from ODE.

Ohio also leads the nation in the percent of eligible Head Start children served. However, Ohio is not a leader in ensuring the quality of Head Start programs. Ohio's overall rating on quality indicators is only slightly above the national average and there is great variability across Head Start grantees.

Approximately 81% of Ohio Head Start children are in center-based programs that meet 3.5 hours for 139 days per year. This part-day part-year program does not meet the growing need for full-day full-year services.

Funding process. Although the majority of Ohio Head Start children (81%) are in center-based programs that meet part-day part-year, many parents need care for at least eight hours per day for a full year. Grantees would like to increase the number of hours and days of service if they had more discretionary funding.

Currently, the Ohio Department of Human Services (ODHS) process for funding child care only reimburses providers for the days the children are actually in the center or home. If a child is absent, the provider does not receive state dollars for that day. In addition, parents can lose their child care funding if the family income increases during the year. These practices make it impossible for a center to hire staff to be consistently available to the child and interfere with collaboration between Head Start and child care providers.

Facilities. Availability of adequate facilities is a major barrier to serving more children. Of the approximate 750 Head Start sites, grantees consider nearly one in five either marginal or substandard, even though the sites meet state licensing requirements.

Availability of adequate facilities is a major barrier to serving more children. Of the approximate 750 Head Start sites, nearly one in five is considered marginal or substandard, even though they meet state licensing requirements.

Despite the need for safe and affordable facilities, many grantees do not fully access the resources and expertise of the Community Development Finance Fund (CDFF) to assist in decisions regarding facilities.

The process for inspecting and approving facilities before a license can be issued is complex and often causes delays in opening new facilities. Efforts to streamline the facility inspection and approval process have been ongoing since 1993.

Collaboration. To meet the needs of working families in poverty, Head Start programs must increase their collaboration with private day care, home providers, Public School Preschools, and other providers of child care services.

Head Start programs must increase their collaboration with private day care, home providers, Public School Preschools, and other providers of child care services to meet the demands of welfare reform.

Grantees identified "turf battles," the quality of other early childhood programs, different rules among agencies and providers, differing child care philosophies, and providers serving different populations as barriers to collaboration.

ODE Oversight. ODE has not developed the monitoring capacity necessary for effective oversight of a constantly expanding Head Start program. Despite the availability of information on individual grantee performance, ODE chooses not to consider indicators of quality when allocating expansion funding.

There is no systematic collection of information by ODE to determine the impact of Head Start on children and families. There is very little tracking of Head Start children into the public schools, which makes it very difficult to study the long-term effects of Head Start.

ODE's oversight and management of Head Start is insufficient for a rapidly expanding program.

LOEO also found problems with ODE's record keeping and information management. Because ODE's record keeping is inconsistent with the federal forms, it is difficult to understand the implementation of state and federally funded Head Start programs. In addition, ODE does not maintain electronic files on Head Start programs, which prohibits them from answering basic oversight questions, analyzing trends, or providing information for program improvement.

Am. Sub. H.B. 117 requires ODE to use the number of children in families receiving Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) or Food Stamps in its calculation of the percent of the eligible children served by Head Start. Using this proxy for children in poverty, in combination with ODE's use of funded rather than actual enrollment, inflates the reported percent of the eligible Head Start children that are served.

Recommendations

LOEO concludes that Head Start is a viable program for helping Ohio's three and four year old children in poverty enter school ready to learn. To accomplish this policy goal in combination with the welfare reform goal of helping parents enter the work force, changes are needed in the implementation of Head Start in Ohio. Improvements are needed in the state funding process, the acquisition of suitable facilities, collaboration efforts with other early childhood providers, and Ohio Department of Education oversight.

Additional Funding for Head Start and Child Care

LOEO believes the best child care options are either full-day Head Start or a combination of Head Start and licensed child care. Both options allow families in poverty to receive Head Start's comprehensive health and social services. They provide children an education program that promotes their intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development as well as quality child care. Because of welfare reform, during fiscal years 1998 and 1999 approximately 26,000 and 31,000 Ohio three and four year olds will need full-day full-year care while their parents work.

LOEO recommends:

- The Ohio General Assembly support the Governor's proposal to provide additional funding for Ohio Head Start and for child care. These dollars should accompany changes in the ODE and ODHS funding process.

State Funding Process

In practice, state expansion dollars focus on a single goal -- serving more eligible Head Start children. The Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) funding process needs more flexibility to allow grantees to respond to the specific needs of Head Start families and to encourage more collaboration with other child care providers to offer full-day full-year care. LOEO's estimated annual cost of offering full-day full-year Head Start is $7,823 per child. The annual cost of providing Head Start in one location and transporting children for licensed child care in another setting is $7,915 per child.

The current Head Start/JOBS Collaboration may reveal ways to reduce these costs by co-locating Head Start in centers or the homes of child care providers. Other benefits of co-location are providing the same caregiver to a child all day, improving the quality of child care and the skills and future job opportunities of providers, and reducing the need for new Head Start facilities.

LOEO recommends:

- The Ohio General Assembly and ODE change the guidelines and methods for allocating the state's new Head Start funds by not requiring that all expansion dollars be tied to serving more children. Grantees should be given greater flexibility to use expansion dollars to improve program quality, including staff salaries. Grantees falling below acceptable levels of quality should be given technical assistance from ODE and not awarded expansion dollars, except to improve the quality of their program.

- Using expansion funds to give incentives to grantees and child care providers who jointly develop cost-saving ways to combine Head Start and licensed child care. Priority should be given to proposals that allow the young child to stay in the same location all day. ODE should study these arrangements to see how costs have been reduced in order to advise future state budgets.

- Using expansion funds to allow grantees to respond to the varying needs of children and families by giving grantees different per-child amounts based on the mix of program options needed in their communities. ODE should fund full-day full-year Head Start only for grantees who can document its need.

The Ohio Department of Human Services (ODHS) child care funding process only reimburses providers for the days the children are actually in the center or the home. In addition, parents can lose their child care funding if the family income increases during the year. This makes it difficult to hire staff to be consistently available to a child and it interferes with collaboration between Head Start and child care providers.

At least for its collaboration with Head Start, LOEO recommends:

- ODHS switch to a funding mechanism that guarantees the child care provider stable funding, even for the days the child is absent.

- ODHS guarantee child care funding for an entire year for eligible working parents, regardless of whether their incomes move above the eligibility guidelines during the year.

Facilities

LOEO recommends:

- The Ohio General Assembly continue to fund the technical assistance and facility planning grants provided by the Community Development Finance Fund (CDFF). ODE should require grantees to use the resources and expertise available through CDFF, including the review of leases, loans, and facility projects prior to entering into agreements. As a priority, CDFF should focus on assisting grantees who are currently using marginal and substandard facilities to relocate.

- Statutes and regulations be changed in order to simplify the day care licensing process.

Collaboration

LOEO recommends:

- The Ohio Department of Human Services, Ohio Department of Education, and Ohio Family and Children First identify any state or local agency operating rules and regulations that prevent collaboration among them or public, private, and nonprofit early childhood providers. These rules and regulations should be compiled in a report to policy makers and include recommendations for required legislative changes.

- The Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) implement strategies to eliminate the turf battles which are preventing many OFCF local councils from effectively collaborating with Head Start. Such strategies should include recognizing and endorsing effective local collaborations and including all major early childhood providers in local planning and program development efforts.

ODE Oversight

LOEO recommends:

- The Ohio General Assembly require ODE to improve its management of information by modifying state reporting forms to make them compatible with federal forms and upgrading its technology to conduct on-going policy analysis. ODE could use LOEO's relational database as a starting point for building electronic files on costs, enrollments, and the status of grantees.

- In addition to the current collection of data about processes, ODE require grantees to collect impact data as a condition for state funding. The Ohio General Assembly should require the use of a common instrument for evaluating program impact on children and families and direct ODE to analyze the data and report on its findings.

- The Ohio General Assembly require schools to include records on the pre-kindergarten education experience of children in the Education Management Information System (EMIS). Further, LOEO recommends that ODE be required to periodically report on the comparative achievements of Head Start children as they progress in public schools.

- The Ohio General Assembly require ODE to use census data to calculate the eligible Head Start population. Further, ODE should use actual, rather than funded enrollment, when calculating and publishing the percent of eligible children served by Head Start.

IMPLEMENTATION OF HEAD START IN OHIO

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COMMENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Head Start is a federal anti-poverty program begun in 1965 to provide comprehensive services to three and four year old children and their families.

Since 1990, the Ohio General Assembly has invested over $300 million state dollars to supplement the federal Head Start program in Ohio. Encouraged by Governor Voinovich, increasing the number of children in Head Start has been an important state strategy for accomplishing the first national education goal -- all children will enter school ready to learn.

In recent years a second policy initiative has affected the same population of children and families in poverty -- welfare reform. In effect, Ohio has two simultaneous policy goals that can either complement or contradict each other: 1) helping young children get ready for school and 2) helping their parents become part of the workforce.

Although the effects of both state and federal welfare reform are unknown at this time, what is clear is that the need for child care outside the home will increase. To address the policy goal of having all children ready for school, this care must be of such quality that children are not only kept safe from harm, but are supported in their intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development.

National studies of Head Start impact

LOEO synthesized the findings from 16 research studies of Head Start and other preschool programs for disadvantaged children frequently cited by early childhood experts. Overall, these studies demonstrate that quality Head Start programs are effective.

The research stresses the importance of quality for the programs to produce positive results. Studies show that program effects are greater and last longer for children participating in model early childhood programs. However, these programs are funded at a higher level than typical Head Start programs.

Child development experts agree that to expect positive results, there must be a guarantee of quality in programs, including:

- a sustained relationship with a caregiver;
- competent, well-trained staff;
- age-appropriate curriculum that allows the child to initiate learning activities;
- small classes and low staff-child ratios;
- parent involvement; and
- attention to the child's needs for safety, health, and nurturing.

Without these ingredients, an early childhood program -- whether Head Start or any other -- cannot be expected to help children get ready for school or later life.

There is little agreement, however, on the long and short term expectations for Head Start. Some expect that early childhood programs should inoculate young children from the effects of poverty for the rest of their childhood. Others argue that such programs should only be expected to give children skills to take advantage of schooling. If the subsequent schooling is poor, they maintain, it is unfair to say the preschool program was ineffective.

In the midst of these mixed expectations, credible research shows that children leave Head Start "ready to learn" with gains on achievement tests, IQ, and health measurements. These effects

continue for two to four years, after which no appreciable differences appear between Head Start participants and those without preschool experiences.

Studies on the long term impact of Head Start conclude that participants are less likely to be retained in grade or to be placed in special education or remedial classes and are more likely to attend school regularly and to graduate. These studies also show that former Head Start participants have higher levels of social competence, including self-esteem and motivation to achieve. See Appendix A for more information on this research.

Ohio's investment in Head Start

As a result of the combined state and federal effort, over 54,000 Ohio three and four year olds are participating in Head Start during the fiscal year 1997. To be eligible, family income must be at or below the federal poverty level, $15,600 for a family of four. Based on Ohio Department of Education calculations in November 1996, Ohio enrolls 75% of the eligible population. Nationally, Head Start enrolls 38%.

Given the investment of over $300 million state tax dollars and the expectation that the Head Start program would continue to expand, the Ohio General Assembly required in Amended Substitute House Bill 117 that the Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) study the implementation and impact of Head Start in Ohio. Members of the Legislative Committee on Education Oversight advised LOEO in this effort.

Purpose

This LOEO report focuses on Head Start implementation. A second report, scheduled for Fall 1997, will address the program's impact on Ohio's children and families.

This implementation report describes Head Start in Ohio in terms of:

- its growth over the last eight years;
- what it provides to three and four year old children in poverty and their families;
- its costs;
- its quality and how it is monitored; and
- the challenges it faces to expand.

Given the two state policy goals of helping children get ready for school and helping their parents work, LOEO's recommendations focus on the future of Head Start in the larger context of programs for preschoolers. The recommendations address the question of how Head Start can help the state meet both policy goals simultaneously.

Methods

To conduct this study, LOEO:

- reviewed over 100 documents about Head Start and synthesized the national research literature on its effectiveness (see bibliography in Appendix B);
- converted over 300 paper files into an electronic data base to analyze costs and enrollments;
- conducted nine intensive on-site interviews with Head Start directors and other staff;
- conducted 46 telephone interviews with Head Start directors;
- visited 40 facilities and over 100 classrooms;
- interviewed state and federal officials and stakeholders;
- reviewed federal and state data bases on costs, salaries, quality indicators, and facilities; and
- convened a focus group of 18 state and national early childhood experts to respond to initial findings and recommendations.

LOEO examined differences among Head Start agencies according to urban or rural location, their association with a Community Action Agency, and the levels of poverty in their county. LOEO also looked at regional differences when examining data regarding Head Start facilities. We describe these factors in the report only when we found substantial differences.

Report organization

The next chapter of this report describes Head Start nationally and its operation in Ohio. Chapter III outlines the cost of implementing Head Start. Chapter IV presents the challenges to its implementation, focusing on facilities, staffing, collaboration, and the monitoring of program quality. Chapter V considers the future expansion of Head Start in light of welfare reform and Chapter VI presents LOEO's conclusions and recommendations for changes in the implementation of Head Start in Ohio.

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF HEAD START IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter describes Head Start's comprehensive services, federal and state funding, its operation in Ohio, and how it compares to other early childhood programs.

Background

Head Start is a comprehensive program designed to prepare young children in poverty for a successful school experience. The principal goal of Head Start is to meet the developmental needs of poor children in order to increase their "social competence" in school and other settings. Because poor children often face educational, medical, and nutritional disadvantages, Head Start provides services and opportunities before they enter school.

Head Start is a two-generation program, intended to affect both children and parents, particularly mothers. From its beginning, Head Start has sought to strengthen the child's home environment by increasing parents' coping skills, confidence, resources, and support systems.

As an anti-poverty program, Head Start connects parents with social services to obtain training and jobs, to develop skills for coping with daily problems, and to help them take responsibility for their futures.

With its multiple goals, Head Start has been able to garner political support from many sectors of society for over 30 years. The problems faced by today's Head Start eligible families, however, are far more complex and severe than those of its original participants. The environment where poor children live now involves more homelessness, street violence, illegal drugs, and young, single-parent families.

One in four of Ohio preschool children lives in poverty. Approximately 38% of Ohio families in poverty are headed by a single parent, about half of whom do not have a high school diploma. To be eligible for Head Start, in 1996 the income of a family of four could be no more than $15,600, equivalent to an hourly wage of $7.50.

Head Start services

Head Start services to families are described as "comprehensive." Local Head Start agencies must design their program around a needs assessment of the participating families, the developmental needs of the children, and the culture of their community.

One unique feature of Head Start is the involvement of parents in its operation and the active encouragement of parents to participate in their child's learning. Head Start provides parenting classes and other educational opportunities to parents. It often employs parents as Head Start staff. Federal regulations require that parents participate in overall policy decisions through the election of representatives to an agency-wide "Policy Council." The Council must sign off on the application for federal funds.

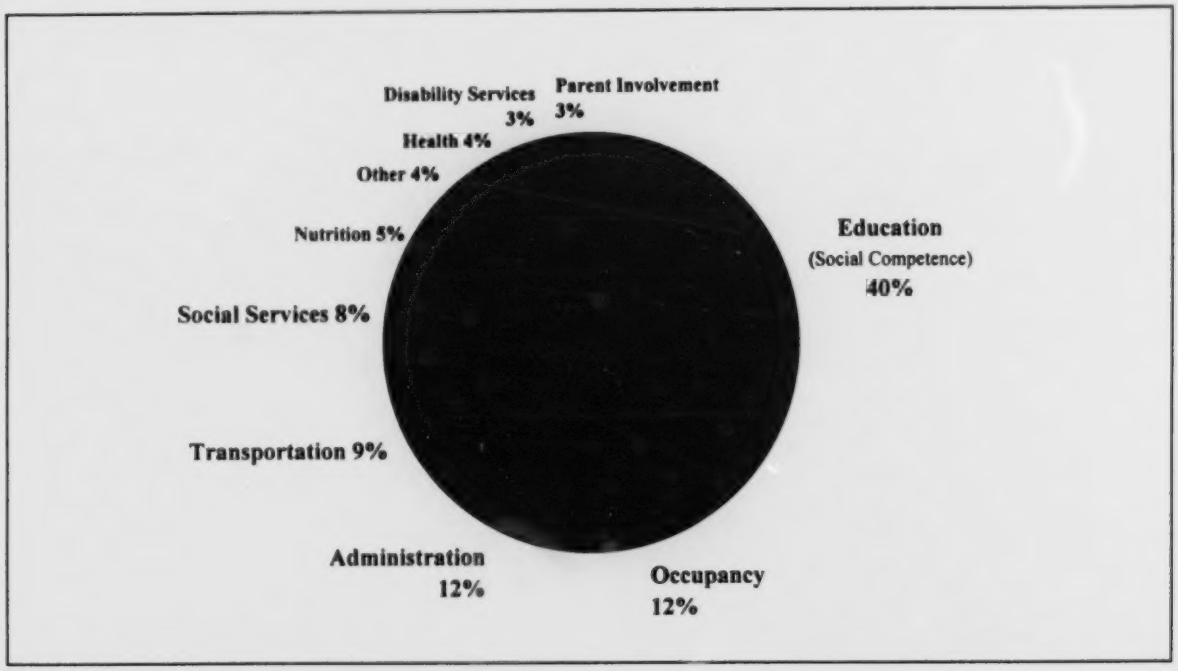
Exhibit 1 displays Head Start's program components and the principal activities that define them. Exhibit 2 shows the distribution of funds to each program component in Ohio.

As illustrated in Exhibit 2, only 40% of Head Start funds are allocated to the "education component" what most people would consider a "preschool" program.

Exhibit 1
Activities Provided Within Head Start Program Components

Education (Social Competence)	Occupancy	Administration	Transportation	Social Services	Nutrition	Health	Disability Services	Parent Involvement and Education
Teach social competence skills, including: • Self-expression • Using appropriate language • Controlling anger • Problem solving • Listening and working independently • Following instructions • Pre-academic concepts, such as colors, numbers, shapes	Rent Renovation Maintenance Utilities Building insurance	Maintain accountability records to comply with 256 federal program standards Ensure collaboration between grantees and various early childhood agencies Coordinate the Policy Council	Transport: Children between home or child care providers and Head Start centers Family service workers to homes Children to doctors, dentists, and mental health specialists Parents to literacy programs or job training or placement	Connect families to community resources Provide emergency assistance or crisis intervention	Provide balanced meals and snacks daily in a family-table setting	Prevention: early identification and treatment of mental and physical problems Ensuring immunization and physicals	Make 10% of openings available to children with disabilities Include children with disabilities in all activities and services Ensure children with disabilities receive additional services as necessary	Classes in child development and parenting skills Program planning and decisions through Policy Council Literacy training, GED preparation, and job skills, as needed

Exhibit 2
Average Percent Allocated to each Head Start Component in Ohio
FY 1996 Federal and State Funds



Head Start funding

Nationally. Across the United States, nearly all of the support for Head Start comes from federal funds. Head Start began as a two-week summer program in 1965 with funding of $96.4 million. Federal Head Start funding totaled $27.6 billion from 1965 through 1994, supporting services to a total of nearly 15 million children.

Nationally, federal dollars have served an average of 486,000 children each year. The federal funding provided for each child has increased substantially. In 1966, the national average per child was $172; in 1994, it was $4,491.

In addition to the funding from federal Head Start grants, programs receive funds from the following possible sources: the U.S. Department of Agriculture (for meals); in-kind support; and in some instances -- state funding.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services sends the federal dollars directly to local Head Start agencies. Federal Head Start funds cover 80% of program costs, with the remaining 20% coming from in-kind contributions of the local community. These contributions usually consist of volunteer time, donations of goods or funds, and free or reduced rent for facilities.

In Ohio. Ohio is *among the leaders* in the amount of federal funding it receives. In 1994, only four states -- California, Illinois, New York and Texas -- received more federal funds than Ohio. Only three states -- California, New York and Texas -- served more children with their federal funds.

Ohio is *the leader* in providing state support for Head Start. Ohio's support is the largest among the thirteen states providing state funds. Of these, Ohio and seven others fund direct services to children and families; five states provide funds only to increase program quality or salaries.

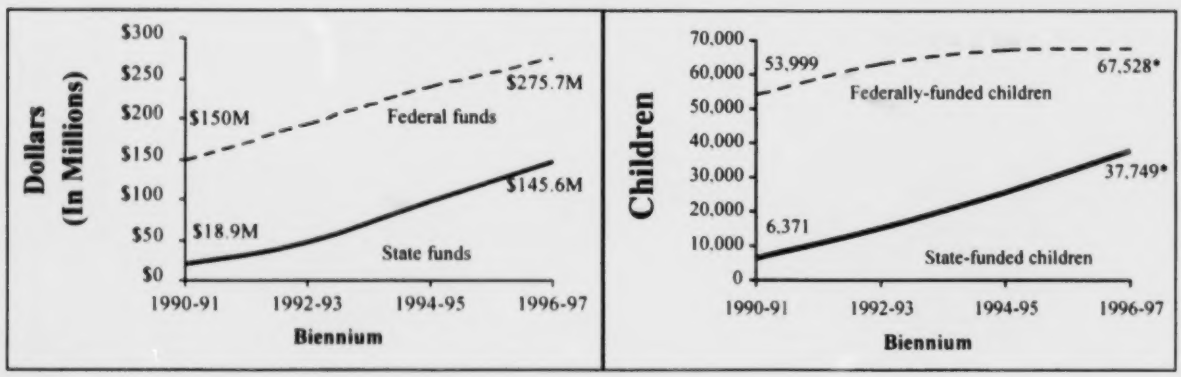
Since 1990, Ohio has provided $308 million to Head Start programs. Almost half of this total investment, $145.6 million, has occurred in fiscal years 1996 and 1997. An additional $35.7 million has been proposed for fiscal years 1998 and 1999.

Most of the state dollars go to Head Start agencies as continuation and expansion grants. The current budget also includes several set-asides described in Chapter III. The Ohio Department of Education manages state funding of Head Start.

Exhibit 3 shows the history of state and federal funding and children served in Ohio since 1990. Highlights include:

- Federal funding to Ohio has increased almost two-fold since 1990. State funding for Head Start has increased almost eight-fold in the same period.
- The state currently provides one-third of Ohio's total Head Start appropriations.
- State-funded children currently account for nearly 40% of Ohio's total Head Start enrollment.
- The rapid increase in the number of state children reflects Ohio's priority to enroll as many eligible children as possible.
- The less rapid increase in the number of federal children is due in part to the federal priority to improve quality.

Exhibit 3
Growth of Head Start in Ohio
Federal and State Funding and Children Served
1990-1997



* Combines children served during fiscal years 1996 and 1997.

Concerned about whether Head Start agencies would be able to expand as rapidly as the state funding allowed while maintaining quality, a Governor's Head Start Task Force convened in 1993. Appendix C summarizes the status of its recommendations on quality, facilities, and licensing.

Operation of Head Start in Ohio

A local Head Start program is operated by an agency designated by federal or state statute as a "grantee." Some grantees in larger urban areas subcontract the provision of Head Start services to "delegates." There are 56 grantees and 18 delegates in Ohio.

All 88 Ohio counties are served by one or more grantees; 42 grantees are a part of a Community Action Agency (CAA). Ten grantees are "stand alone" agencies and four are part of public school districts. Across Ohio, Head Start grantees and delegates operate approximately 750 facilities and over 1,600 classrooms.

"Being part of the Community Action Agency allows us to be more successful in our collaboration with other agencies. All of our parents are encouraged to get their GED, and we have a basic literacy program as part of our Community Action Agency and funding through the Community Services Block Grant. Because we are associated with a Community Action Agency, we provide an energy assistance program and assist parents with jobs outside of Head Start." -- Head Start director

Program options

In Ohio, grantees deliver the educational component of Head Start in four program options. Regardless of the options a grantee offers, the program must meet Head Start performance standards and offer the children and their families all of Head Start's comprehensive services. Program options include:

Part-day center-based (81%). Children receive Head Start's educational component in the classroom. Most children come to a Head Start center for three and one-half hours per day, typically for 139 days per year. Children in a few center-based programs attend up to six hours per day. Many center-based programs operate a morning and afternoon session to serve more children.

Home-based (10%). Children and families receive weekly home visits from the Head Start staff that usually last between an hour and an hour and a half. The child receives "socialization" through a weekly classroom experience. Parents receive instruction on providing the educational activities and share the education component with the Head Start staff.

Full-day center-based (7%). Children in this center-based option receive six to 11 hours in the classroom, typically 240 days per year.

Combination (2%). Children receive services from a program that combines elements of the other options.

These percentages reflect state-funded children only. Similar information on all federally funded children is not available. Exhibit 4 summarizes key facts about Ohio Head Start.

Exhibit 4
Operation of Head Start in Ohio
FY 1997

- 54,628 children, mostly 4 year olds
- all 88 Ohio counties participate
- operated by 56 grantees and 18 delegates
- 42 grantees are part of Community Action Agencies; 10 are stand-alone agencies; and 4 are part of school districts
- about 750 facilities and over 1,600 classrooms
- children served in four program options:
  - center-based (part day; typically 139 days per year) 81%
  - home-based (weekly visit) 10%
  - full-day center-based (6 or more hours; typically 240 days per year) 7%
  - combination of above 2%

Staff training

Ohio places considerable emphasis on staff training. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) uses set-aside funds in the state budget to support grants to several professional organizations in the state so they can provide training programs to Head Start staff and parents. Appendix D provides a summary of these activities.

Comparison with other programs

Public School Preschools. In fiscal year 1990, Ohio began funding both Head Start and Public School Preschool programs. Administered by ODE, Public School Preschools provide early childhood education to "low income families" by requiring that at least half the enrolled children come from families with incomes *at or below 185% of the federal poverty level.*

In contrast, to be eligible for Head Start, families must be at or below *100% of the federal poverty level.* No more than 10% of Head Start children can be from families with income above this level. Often this 10% includes children with disabilities.

State funds for Public School Preschools can only go to school districts that demonstrate a need and are eligible for Disadvantaged Pupil Impact Aid. Families above 100% of poverty can be charged a sliding fee.

As of 1994, Public School Preschools are required to provide education and support services consistent with most Head Start standards. Since first funded in 1990, Ohio has served over 41,800 children in Public School Preschools at a total cost of $110 million.

Other early childhood providers. Although providing child care is not a focus of most Head Start programs, families often rely on the safe, nurturing environment of the Head Start classroom to serve that function. Some Head Start programs collaborate with child care providers to make participation possible for children who, without full-day care, would be unable to receive the comprehensive program that Head Start provides.

Head Start also shares some of the challenges common to most providers of child care. Wages for child care workers are almost universally low, with an hourly wage yielding an income around the federal poverty level.

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In part because of low wages, attracting and retaining competent child care workers is an industry wide problem. This is of particular concern because much research on child development cites the necessity for ongoing, consistent relationships with individual adults.

Exhibit 5 shows the differences and similarities among early childhood education and care providers.

Elementary and secondary schools. Another common comparison is between Head Start and K-12 schools, especially in terms of costs. A cost comparison is not possible, however, because the services and expenditures are different.

Head Start provides comprehensive services to children and families and its education component focuses on developing a child's *social competence*. Elementary and secondary schools primarily focus on the *academic* development of students. Furthermore, very young children need much smaller class sizes than older children.

In addition, Head Start programs must pay for their facilities as part of their operating budgets. In contrast, school districts have separate bond levies to acquire facilities and do not include the debt service in their per-pupil costs.

Exhibit 5
Characteristics of Early Childhood Providers Serving Low-income Families

	Licensing	Performance monitoring	Annual hours in facility	Source of funds	Required to serve children with disabilities?	Lead teacher credential requirements
Head Start	ODHS or ODE*	Federal and ODE review	540	U.S. and Ohio taxpayers	10% reserved for children with disabilities	Child Development Associate
Public School Preschool	ODE	Local school district	720	Ohio taxpayers; some parent co-pay	10% reserved for children with disabilities	Bachelor Degree or Teaching Certificate
Accredited child care center**	ODHS	Accrediting agency	2,500	Parents; occasionally U.S. and Ohio taxpayers	No	Associate of Arts
Licensed child care center	ODHS	Local human services agency	2,500	Parents; U.S. and Ohio taxpayers	No	High School Diploma or Child Care Training
Licensed in-home care	ODHS	Local human services agency	Varies	Parents; U.S. and Ohio taxpayers	No	High School Diploma or Child Care Training
Unregulated care	None	None	Varies	Parents; U.S. and Ohio taxpayers	No	None

* Ohio Department of Human Services or Ohio Department of Education

** National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or similar agency

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CHAPTER III

COST OF IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter explains how federal and state Head Start funds are allocated and the cost of providing Head Start services.

Allocation of funds

Federal and state policy makers allocate Head Start funds differently, somewhat due to their different goals for the program. In recent years, the federal goal has been to increase the quality of Head Start programs. In contrast, the state goal has been to increase the number of children served.

Federal allocation process. Historically, the federal government has disbursed dollars based upon the grantees' original request. When grantees first applied for federal funds, they each provided a detailed budget of what it would cost to operate their program. Each grantee then received different levels of funding, which resulted in different amounts per child. As of 1996, these differences among grantees in Ohio ranged from $3,220 to $6,063 per child.

Since their first requests, grantees continue to receive this same *base* funding with incremental increases for inflation. Any increase in federal funding beyond this base has come in the form of program expansion or quality improvement dollars.

Currently, 25% of federal Head Start dollars must be devoted to improving quality. Grantees use these funds to:

- increase staff wages;
- pay for transportation costs;
- employ additional staff to improve staff-child ratios;
- purchase child liability insurance;
- improve facilities and equipment; and
- improve the skills of staff through training.

State allocation process. The Ohio General Assembly provides state funds to grantees in the form of *continuation* and *expansion* grants. As long as a grantee is not defunded because of federal performance reviews, the state guarantees *continuation* funding. However, the grantee must serve at least the same number of children as the previous year.

Each *continuation* grant starts with the previous year's funds plus an inflationary increase. State continuation dollars have historically mirrored a grantee's federal funding. Thus, state allocations have reinforced the different per-child amounts grantees receive from the federal government.

In addition to their continuation funding, state-supported Head Start programs may apply for *expansion* funding. Currently, the goal of expansion funds is to serve more children. While grantees may use expansion funds to make program improvements, they must commit to serving *additional* children to receive expansion dollars.

The state distributes expansion grants on a competitive basis, with priority given to grantees serving the smallest percentage of their eligible population. During fiscal years 1996 and 1997, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) gave grantees equal per-child amounts for expansion -- $3,500. Expansion dollars eventually become part of a grantee's continuation funding the following biennium.

In addition to ongoing funds, ODE provides grantees with start-up dollars to help grantees serve more eligible children. Unlike expansion funding, start-up awards are one time only and do not become part of grantees' continuation funding. The 121st General Assembly set aside $1 million for start-up costs to expand Head Start programs in FY 1997.

Under the Head Start/JOBS Collaboration, the state provides $6 million in the ODE budget for full-day services for Head Start parents. The children receive all day care and the parents can work or attend job training programs. During the current biennium, 25 Head Start grantees are providing services to approximately 900 Head Start families. Grantees also receive start-up funds to initiate this collaboration effort. Another $6 million is included in the Ohio Department of Human Services budget for this effort.

Exhibit 6 provides a summary of the Head Start budget.

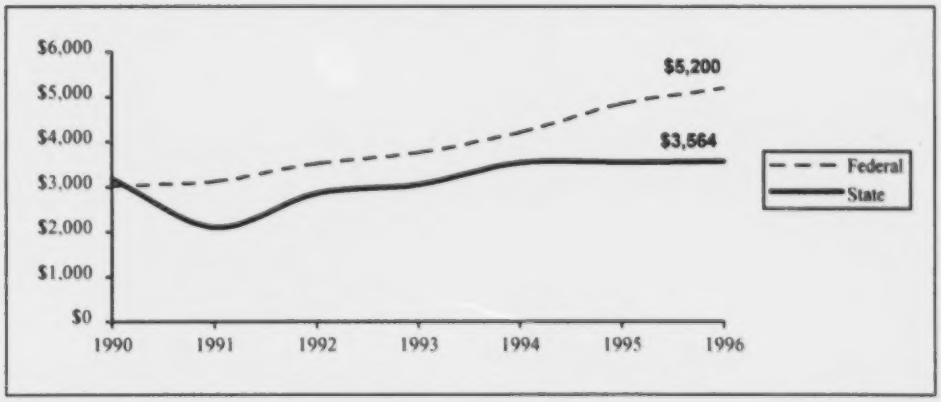
Exhibit 6
Summary of State Funding
FY 1996 and 1997

Continuation and expansion funds to grantees	$132.4 million
Set Asides:	
ODE administration	1.46 million
Management Assistance funds	1.46 million
Ohio Community Development Finance Fund	3.0 million
Head Start/JOBS Collaboration	6.0 million
Start-up costs associated with expansion	1.0 million
Legislative Office of Education Oversight study	0.3 million
TOTAL	**$145.6 million**

State and federal per-child funding

In 1996, the federal government provided an average of $5,200 per child, including the in-kind contribution. In contrast, the state's funding per child averaged $3,564. As Exhibit 7 illustrates, there has been a gap between state and federal per-child funding since Ohio began supporting Head Start in 1990.

Exhibit 7
State and Federal Per-Child Funding



State rules allow ODE to increase continuation grants by a "reasonable" amount in an attempt to improve parity with the federally funded Head Start programs. Two biennia ago, ODE tried to bring all continuation awards up to a minimum level of $3,200 per child. However, ODE's appropriation was limited and the budget bill prohibited giving any grantee less than it had received in the previous year. Consequently, not all grantees were able to reach this minimum level.

Combining federal and state funds

Ohio has been able to successfully expand Head Start participation by building upon the resources provided by the federal government. All but one Ohio grantee receives both federal and state funds.

Due in part to the different state and federal funding levels, many Ohio grantees serve state- and federally funded children in the same facility at one or more of their sites, although usually not in the same classroom. Grantees rely more heavily on federal funds to cover the costs of items that can be most easily shared *across* classrooms.

> **"The federal funds have paid the bulk of some facility costs and it doesn't cost so much to add a classroom that serves state-funded students." -- Head Start director**

LOEO asked grantees if state dollars alone would pay the cost of their current level of service to state-funded children, if there were no federal dollars. Most grantees responded that state dollars would be *insufficient* to pay for central administrative staff, facilities, transportation, and staff training. Some grantees also reported that state dollars are insufficient to pay teachers a salary comparable to that of teachers in federally funded classrooms.

> **A director explained that her programs "don't mingle their state and federal children. The discrepancy [between state and federal funding] is so large that some [state] programs must be closed earlier in the year." She noted that her agency must choose between cutting services to all children or providing "state-funded" children with less than "federally funded" children.**

Rather than attempting to duplicate all of the components and resources used to operate the federal Head Start program, grantees have used state funds to increase education and social services staff. These efforts have been consistent with the improved staff ratios recommended by the 1993 Governor's Head Start Task Force.

See Appendix E for an exhibit illustrating how grantees budgeted state and federal Head Start dollars across Head Start components in 1996.

State-funded children clearly benefit from federal dollars. Similarly, the federal Head Start regional administration benefits from state efforts. ODE's administrative oversight has helped reduce the number of federal staff needed to conduct reviews of Head Start programs.

Furthermore, Ohio's set-aside for management assistance helps reduce the level of federal training resources that must be provided to Ohio's grantees.

Head Start costs

Since all but one of Ohio's grantees receive both federal and state funding, LOEO computed a single "per-child cost" that includes all state and federal resources and the children served by these grantees.

LOEO used the dollars *allocated* to grantees to calculate this figure. In effect, "allocations" serve as LOEO's proxy for the "cost" of Head Start.

By combining federal ($5,200) and state ($3,564) per-child spending, LOEO estimates that $4,700 is spent to serve a typical Ohio Head Start child and family. The services provided with this amount include 480 hours of classroom and home visit programming, in addition to comprehensive services to the family.

As noted, grantees are required to match 20% of their federal dollars with local contributions. They do not have to report, however, the in-kind contributions beyond this 20%. As a result, the total resources spent on Head Start in Ohio are not available for analysis. Consequently, the $4,700 figure is an ***underestimate*** of the cost to serve an Ohio Head Start child. Appendix F provides more detail on the calculation of the per-child cost estimate.

Cost of each program option

LOEO recognized that the $4,700 figure masks the variations in Head Start costs for each type of program. For example, serving children all day would certainly cost more than serving them part day.

Per-child cost by program option. Although the federal forms specify the percent of a grantee's budget devoted to each program option, the state forms do not. To estimate the combined federal and state expenditures for each program option, LOEO calculated a "*per-child-hour*" cost.

Per-child-hour cost by program option. Children receive vastly different hours of service depending on their program option. As evident in Exhibit 8, grantees with similar *per-child* costs can differ greatly in the amount they spend *per-child-hour* on each option. The hourly cost decreases as the percent of center-based and the number of hours increases.

Exhibit 8
Per-Child and Per-Child Hour Costs for Three Grantees*

Grantee	Per-child cost	Percent of children in largest program option	Average annual program hours per child	Per-child-hour cost
A	$4,553	89% home-based	128 hours	$28.23
B	$4,537	90% center-based	463 hours	$10.83
C	$4,451	100% center-based	971 hours	$4.57

* Combined state and federal

Limited funds determine program options. The per-child-hour figure demonstrates that grantees need varying amounts of funding per child to offer the different program options. Grantees are supposed to determine their program options according to the needs of the local community. The availability of funds, however, determines which program options are provided.

Although grantees report that parents need child care for more hours and more days, 81% of Ohio Head Start children are in center-based programs that meet 3.5 hours per day for 139 days per year. The cost of providing more services exceeds the $3,500 per-child expansion allotment provided by the state.

Grantees cannot expand their services given current funding levels, regardless of the needs of local families.

Grantees lack flexibility. Am. Sub. H.B. 117 states that grantees may use expansion dollars toward start-up costs associated with program expansion, additional support staff, and program improvements. In practice, however, grantees must agree to serve an additional child for every $3,500 in expansion funds it receives.

When asked what they would do with additional funds not tied to the purpose of expansion, grantees responded they would prefer to increase the number of hours and days of service to children and families (48%) or improve staff salaries (26%).

When funds are limited, improving program quality and providing more services compete with the goal of enrolling more children.

CHAPTER IV
CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter presents LOEO findings about the facilities and staffing barriers faced in implementing Head Start, as well as the difficulties encountered in establishing effective collaboration and maintaining program quality.

Lack of Adequate Facilities

Currently Head Start children are served in about 750 facilities throughout Ohio. The exact number of facilities changes as grantees expand into new sites, consolidate classrooms from multiple sites, and open new sites to be closer to eligible children.

In August 1993, the Governor's Head Start Task Force reported that the rapid expansion of Head Start in Ohio was making it increasingly difficult to locate suitable facilities. Similarly, in the LOEO interviews, 76% of grantees reported the lack of adequate and affordable facilities as the greatest barrier to further expansion.

The availability of facilities also affects the ongoing operation of Head Start. Often the facility being used determines how, when, and where grantees provide services. The facility can also affect the quality of those services.

> In one site owned by a church, smoking bingo players jeopardize the Head Start license; parking for parents is hard to find while bingo is going on; and security becomes an issue when bingo players walk through the Head Start area. At another church site, Head Start must frequently cancel classes for events such as funerals.

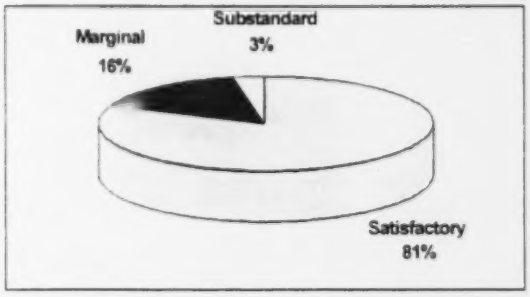
The lack of available facilities takes on different meanings depending on the geographic region. For example, grantees in urban areas may have several buildings to choose from but the cost of renovation is often prohibitive. Conversely, there are very few, if any, buildings to choose from in rural areas.

> "There is nothing that is available, even schools are below building inspection for licensing. We went to look at many buildings, including abandoned grocery stores, abandoned buildings, a daycare facility. I have been out with more real estate people than you could count. One even showed us an abandoned bar. They wanted $1 million for the day care center that wasn't much bigger than our modular." -- Head Start director

Condition of facilities

In early 1996, the Community Development Finance Fund (CDFF) surveyed grantees and asked them to rate the condition of their facilities. LOEO updated this information to provide a more current and complete picture of the condition of Head Start facilities in Ohio. Exhibit 9 summarizes theses results.

Exhibit 9
Condition of Head Start Facilities in Ohio



Of the approximate 750 Head Start sites, grantees consider nearly one in five marginal or substandard, *even though they meet state licensing requirements*. About half of the substandard sites are located in the northeast region of Ohio, where only one-third of all Head Start sites are located.

LOEO visited 17 substandard sites in Ohio. The items most frequently identified as needing to be replaced include: roof, kitchen, plumbing, fixtures, and water supply. These items are very expensive to replace or upgrade and are consistent with the indicators of substandard housing used by the Ohio Department of Development.

Leased, donated, or owned

Grantees lease the majority (66%) of Head Start sites. Another 29% are donated, usually as part of the federal in-kind requirement. Donated facilities include sites with special arrangements, such as grantee's paying nominal rent in exchange for completing building renovations or maintenance. Grantees own very few (5%) Head Start sites.

The combination of leased, donated, and owned sites varies by region. In the northeast region of Ohio, 77% of the sites are leased and 21% are donated. However, in the northwest region only 39% of the sites are leased and 56% are donated. The southeast region of Ohio has the highest percentage of owned sites.

Grantees report that leasing can be more cost effective than owning. Leasing can also provide the flexibility to switch locations when necessary to serve targeted areas. However, leased sites are generally in worse condition than owned or donated sites. About 23% of the leased sites were rated substandard or marginal compared to 14% of the donated and none of the owned sites.

There are also instances when grantees have to leave facilities they paid to renovate. During the last five years, 39% of the grantees were asked to leave a leased facility at least once after paying for significant renovations.

Some grantees think that landlords have taken advantage of them. One director complained that after Head Start completely renovated two classrooms in a school, the school district took them both for kindergarten facilities.

Licensing facilities

All child care centers must be licensed to ensure they are safe for young children. Head Start centers are licensed by either the Ohio Department of Human Services (ODHS) or the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). The licensing agency depends on the type of organization operating the program. ODE licenses Head Start programs operated by schools. ODHS licenses all other Head Start programs. Regardless of which department issues the operating license, the facilities must first meet state building codes, local zoning ordinances, food service requirements, and fire code inspections.

"The licensing process for facilities is horrendous. We started working on purchasing a facility in January. We had to hire an architect to draw up new blueprints; the existing ones weren't acceptable. We spent $4,000 for a set of new blueprints, then had to hire an engineer and a contractor... Then the day care person in commerce decided that they had missed the cut-off for being granted these requirements and wanted the agency to start all over with the licensing process. We have 102 families that are not getting services at the moment, even though they are enrolled. Our facility is not finished because of red tape." -- Head Start director

Inspecting and approving facilities is a complex process, creating obstacles to the timely opening of new facilities. As many as 26 state and local agencies can be involved in inspecting and approving Head Start facilities. Although the Governor's Head Start Task Force

initiated efforts to simplify, coordinate, and improve the licensing and building approval process, it remains a problem for grantees.

Current work on a Facility Approval Service Team (FAST) initiative is designed to simplify and streamline the facilities approval process while maintaining appropriate protection and adequate service at the local level. Appendix C offers more information on FAST.

Using the Community Development Finance Fund (CDFF)

Since 1987, this non-profit organization has provided assistance to stimulate economic development in low-income communities in Ohio. In 1993, ODE used a portion of the management assistance set-aside funds to contract with CDFF to provide technical assistance and training to Head Start programs.

In 1994, CDFF began receiving funds from ODE to provide planning grants to Head Start agencies. These planning grants pay for the "soft costs" of developing facilities, such as architectural drawings, market studies, engineering costs, legal fees, and zoning permits. As of December 1996, fifty planning grants have been approved, totaling $491,299.

As a separate set-aside in the current biennium, the Ohio General Assembly provided $3 million to CDFF to establish the Ohio Nonprofit Facilities Fund. This fund provides a source of guaranteed capital designed to leverage private dollars for developing Head Start facilities. CDFF is behind in its goal of using the original $3 million to leverage an additional $10 million in private funds. However, there are 19 projects in the preliminary stages that may yet be applying for loan guarantees. As a result, it may be too early to evaluate the effectiveness of the Ohio Nonprofit Facilities Fund.

LOEO found that CDFF is currently under-used by the Head Start grantees. Grantees are not required to seek the expertise of CDFF before entering into lease agreements or developing facility projects.

Facility projects include the construction, purchase or renovation of buildings. After a grantee submits a request for a facility project, ODE asks CDFF to review it. However, grantees often make commitments before this review takes place. For example, in at least one case, papers were signed with a bank charging a high interest rate before CDFF could review the contract.

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Scarce Staff and Low Salaries

Research shows the importance of well-educated staff, continuity of relationships between children and their caregivers, and low staff-child ratios. Yet, staffing concerns are common among programs that serve young children. LOEO examined whether grantees are able to maintain adequate staffing, especially given Ohio's rapid expansion of the past few years.

Difficulty finding and retaining staff

Most grantees (72%) report difficulties in *finding* qualified people for Head Start positions. Of these, 85% specifically mention teachers and 61% mention bus drivers.

Retaining qualified staff, especially teachers, teaching assistants, and bus drivers is difficult for 59% of the grantees. These positions require formal credentials, such as the one-year Child Development Associate for lead teachers and the Commercial Drivers License for bus drivers.

> "For children, any turnover is very important and difficult... Even isolated turnover forces a whole new set of relationships to be built." -- Education coordinator

Salaries

Over 70% of the grantees cite low salaries as a main reason for turnover. About two-thirds note that staff often move on to better jobs after receiving training from the Head Start agency.

About 90% of the grantees feel their benefits are better than, or about the same as, comparable employers. Yet, about 30% indicate that inadequate benefits are among the principal reasons for turnover.

The hourly wages for Head Start teachers and bus drivers are quite low. The median rate for bus drivers is $6.50; for teachers, $8.76. To place these rates in perspective, the hourly rate for determining the federal poverty level in 1996 for a family of four was $7.50.

Head Start grantees claim they cannot compete with Public School Preschools for teachers with bachelor or master degrees. Disparities between starting salaries of Public School Preschool and Head Start teachers validate this claim. An average teacher with a bachelor degree enters Public School Preschool employment earning $14.20 per hour. The same person entering Head Start employment earns $8.84 per hour.

However, the majority of Head Start lead teachers have only a Child Development Associate (CDA). The average starting salary for a teacher with a CDA in Head Start is $7.48 per hour -- slightly more than the average $7.31 offered in a Public School Preschool. However, Public School Preschools employ relatively few teachers with only a CDA.

Health care professionals

Many grantees find it difficult to find health-care professionals willing to serve Head Start children:

Dentist	59%
Speech/Auditory Specialist	52%
Doctor	46%
Disability Specialist	35%
Mental Health Specialist	28%

These professionals are either unavailable in the area or are unwilling to accept the payment rates, paperwork, and delays associated with Medicaid reimbursement.

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Obstacles to Collaborating with Other Early Childhood Providers

In the last two budget bills, the Ohio General Assembly encouraged Head Start grantees to collaborate with public schools and other service providers. Head Start programs are involved in several kinds of arrangements to satisfy this expectation.

Ohio Family and Children First Initiative (OFCF)

This initiative brings together staff from eight departments of the executive branch to work toward the goal of having all children enter school ready to learn. OFCF oversees local councils in 88 counties to promote collaboration among government agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and parents.

For over six years, OFCF has administered the federally funded Head Start Collaboration project. This project establishes linkages and removes barriers to collaboration between Head Start programs and state and local agencies providing services to Head Start children and families. According to ODE, the number of children and families receiving child care services has increased as a result of this project.

OFCF local councils are involved in over 13 collaborative projects, such as streamlining intake and referral systems in more than 10 counties. Appendix G provides more information on OFCF activities.

Mixed results

Head Start grantees describe both successful and unsuccessful efforts to collaborate with others who provide services to low-income families. The most frequent and important collaborations are with child care providers, both in centers and in homes. Grantees also describe successful collaborations with Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MR/DD) agencies and special education preschool units.

In an effort to provide all-day care to Head Start families, grantees collaborate with in-home child care providers and child care centers. Most commonly, the children are transported to the child care center or home provider at Head Start's expense.

Head Start grantees are also working with Public School Preschools in some areas to incorporate Head Start standards into their daily practice.

Head Start administrators also mention successful collaborations with higher education institutions, joint vocational schools, and other social service agencies, such as mental health and Community Action Agencies.

During LOEO site visits, grantees identified more negative (56%) than positive (33%) or neutral (22%) experiences working with public schools and Public School Preschools.

When asked for examples of effective collaborations, 85% of the grantees cite *locally initiated efforts*, most of which preceded state attempts to require collaboration.

Other examples of effective collaboration include the local councils of the Ohio Family and Children First Initiative (63%) and the Unified Service Provider Plan (50%).

Yet 37% of the grantees did not identify local Ohio Family and Children First councils as effective in helping Head Start to collaborate. They describe some local councils as "too political" and preoccupied with "turf." They mention instances where OFCF councils have denied participation to some early childhood service providers. Grantees describe some local council directors as "controlling," and as ignoring successful locally initiated collaborations.

The Unified Service Provider Plan (USPP) requires the early childhood providers in a given area to come together with a set of numbers identifying the children needing care. They are expected to work together on the placement of children to eliminate duplication of services and competition for children from low-income families.

Most grantees describe the USPP process as successful only when folded into local efforts, which preexisted state-initiated strategies. In addition, according to ODE, the process never yielded realistic or useable estimates of the number of children served by each provider in a service area.

When combined with locally initiated efforts, the USPP process has contributed to the development of joint recruitment plans, newsletters, bulletin boards of service providers in public places, service directories for families, and cross training of staff from different agencies.

Competition for children in poverty

In six instances, two grantees are operating Head Start programs within the same county. In some counties this arrangement does not pose a problem. However, in others,

grantees told LOEO that they must compete for children with the second grantee serving the same area.

Federal administrators have expressed concern about multiple Head Start grantees operating in the same service area in Ohio and in other states. There is now a federal policy preventing any new grantees from being created in areas already being served.

As noted Public School Preschools serve children below 185% of the federal poverty level. Since Head Start programs serve children at 100% of poverty or below, some grantees are concerned with Public School Preschools "taking their children."

Barriers to collaboration

LOEO asked Head Start grantees to identify the barriers to collaborating with other early childhood providers in their areas. Frequently cited barriers include:

- turf issues among agencies;
- quality of other early childhood programs;
- different operating rules among agencies and providers;
- different child care philosophies; and
- other providers serving a different population.

National research indicates that reimbursement rates and funding policies are two major problems facing Head Start agencies attempting to collaborate with child care providers. For example, the Ohio Department of Human Services reimburses child care providers only when the child is at the center. In addition, if the parents' income moves above the poverty level, they lose their child care funding, even in mid-year.

It is very difficult for Head Start grantees and child care providers to make space and services available to families when funding is not stable or guaranteed. Given this difficulty, many Head Start grantees are unable to find quality child care providers who are willing to help them extend child care services to Head Start eligible families.

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Difficulties in Maintaining Quality

Monitoring process

Federal. The process used by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to monitor the quality of Head Start programs is a complex mix of documentation and compliance reviews. Grantees must adhere to 256 federal performance standards with hundreds of indicators on a voluminous checklist -- termed the On-Site Program Review Instrument (OSPRI).

Each grantee receives a federal review using the OSPRI once every three years. The reviews are extensive, using as many as 2,000 site reviewer hours per visit, the equivalent of a person year.

Until recently, it was rare for a grantee to lose federal funding as a result of these reviews, even if it had been out of compliance for several years. In 1994, federal law became more rigorous. Since then, one Ohio grantee has been defunded.

In addition to the OSPRI review, every grantee must submit a Program Information Report (PIR) to the federal Head Start agency each year. The PIR has 31 indicators which report on such items as enrollment levels, class size, health screenings, parent involvement and teacher credentials. These reports are available to ODE.

The quality of a Head Start program is judged by the extent to which grantees are "in-compliance" with these standards. The standards focus on processes alone. They do not require evidence that grantees are having an impact on the children and families they serve.

Federal administration of Head Start in Ohio is managed through a regional office in Chicago. This Region V office supports a Technical Assistance Service Center (TASC) which aids grantees, especially those who are out of compliance with the federal standards. The regional TASC serving Ohio and two other states is located in Columbus.

State. State oversight, for the most part, defers to the federal process. Ohio made the deliberate policy decision in 1990 to require that the federal process and performance standards be strictly applied and followed by all state-supported grantees. Many of the other states that fund Head Start do not enact such requirements.

Ohio statute requires ODE to visit each grantee each year. These visits are on three year cycles. Details of the ODE monitoring process are provided in Appendix H.

ODE uses some of the funds set aside in the current budget to support a Quality First project. In conjunction with the federally funded TASC, this project provides management assistance to Ohio Head Start grantees. It also provides assistance to Public School Preschools.

Quality of Ohio Head Start

LOEO analyzed the 15 PIR indicators identified by the 1993 Governor's Head Start Task Force as the most critical. (See Appendix H.) We compared Ohio's performance to national averages from 1990 to 1995. We also examined whether performance levels were consistent across Ohio grantees, using the 1995 data. We then compared these findings with the results from the OSPRI reviews.

Slightly above national averages. Ohio's overall ratings are slightly higher than national averages. Specifically, Ohio PIR ratings are more favorable for 35% of the comparisons, less favorable for 15%, and no different on the remaining 50%.

For example, Ohio has a more favorable rating on the percent of children screened for dental problems, but a lower rating on average daily attendance.

Uneven performance across grantees. LOEO found nine grantees with very low-quality ratings on five or more PIR indicators. In addition, 1995 and 1996 OSPRI visits found 18 grantees out of compliance. Four grantees had both very low PIR ratings and were out-of-compliance on the OSPRI.

Furthermore, the PIR analysis reveals problems among other grantees in the areas of health services, program attendance, and teacher credentials. In each of these areas, only a few grantees account for most of the problems.

These findings indicate that even though Ohio as a whole is performing slightly above national averages, a sizable number of Ohio grantees are lagging well behind other Ohio grantees and national averages.

ODE oversight

LOEO reviewed the Ohio Department of Education's capacity to administer and oversee Head Start in Ohio as well as their ability to obtain and provide information to monitor the quality of programs and direct improvement.

The budget set aside for administration of Head Start requires ODE staff to manage the grant process, monitor operations, provide technical assistance to improve quality, and assist in expansion planning. ODE must report annually to the Governor and General Assembly on its monitoring, staffing, and any information

pertinent to the progress of expanding Head Start.

Ignoring indicators of quality. As noted, information on grantee performance is available from the OSPRI review and the PIR. However, LOEO found that ODE does not request PIR data about each grantee from federal Head Start administrators, even though the Governor's Head Start Task Force recommended reviewing these indicators before the annual site visit.

ODE does not consider measures of quality when deciding to allocate expansion funding. The principal "quality control" check on the allocation of funds is the rare occasion when federal administrators find a grantee so out of compliance that it loses its federal funding.

Process, not impact. Similar to the federal approach, ODE does not require grantees to systematically collect information on the program's impact on children and families.

Head Start grantees write detailed anecdotal records about the progress of each child and family as part of their routine operations, but ODE does not collect this information. Although every grantee can recount success stories, ODE has no way of knowing how representative these stories are of the entire Head Start population.

Am. Sub. H.B. 117 required ODE to review "...a random sample of child records to document and report on the developmental outcomes of children." To date, ODE has not reported the results of this additional monitoring responsibility.

LOEO also found that there is very little tracking of Head Start children into public schools. In general, Ohio Head Start agencies and public schools do not share records on individual children. Furthermore, Ohio's Educational Management Information System (EMIS) does not record the preschool educational experiences of children entering kindergarten. As a result, it is very difficult for ODE, or anyone else, to do a longitudinal analysis of the school performance of former Head Start children.

Poor record keeping. ODE provided LOEO with over 300 paper files about grantees. The poor state of the files and differences between state and federal reporting requirements made analyzing these records a daunting task. Many files were incomplete and missing vital information. In other files, the information had never been checked for accuracy; numbers that should have been equivalent differed across documents and within the same document.

ODE authorized more than $11 million dollars to one grantee, yet documents detailing the grantee's 1996 budget do not account for $13,500. In the grantee's 1994-95 budget, there is a $71,400 difference between two numbers that should be the same. The file contains no program schedule for the grantee's 92 expansion children.

Incompatible state and federal records. Although Ohio has decided that grantees must conform to the federal performance standards, ODE requires a set of record keeping forms that are incompatible with federal forms. The forms differ in how grantees apply for funds, describe their costs, and report their progress and problems. This makes it difficult to interpret how a grantee is implementing Head Start.

Absence of electronic files. In an age of information technology, LOEO was surprised ODE does not require or maintain electronic files. Beyond tedious manual searches, there is virtually no way that ODE can respond to requests about the status of grantees, either individually or collectively. Without electronic files ODE does not have the capacity to analyze trends and to provide information for program improvement.

Basic oversight questions asked by LOEO that ODE could not answer:

- How many Head Start sites are there in Ohio? How many classrooms?
- How many delegates are there?
- How many children are served statewide in home-based programs? How many in center-based?
- How many teachers does Head Start employ statewide?
- What percent of the total Head Start funding is spent on education activities?

Misleading calculation of the eligible served. An important calculation in the implementation of Head Start in Ohio is the "number of eligible children served." This is used to gauge Ohio's progress on the goal of serving all eligible children whose parents want to be served. It is also used to determine which grantees should receive priority for expansion funding. As of November 1996, ODE reports that 75% of the eligible population is being served, although ODE is inconsistent in its reporting of this figure.

LOEO found that the way this number is calculated can be misleading. The major difficulty is in the denominator containing the number of "eligible children."

By definition, eligibility for Head Start is family income at or below the federal poverty level. Am. Sub. H.B. 117 requires ODE to use the number of children in families receiving Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) or Food Stamps as a proxy for the number of people in poverty. The calculation used by ODE is:

$$\% \text{ Eligible Served} = \frac{\text{Funded Enrollment}}{\text{Children Age 3 \& 4 on ADC or Food Stamps}}$$

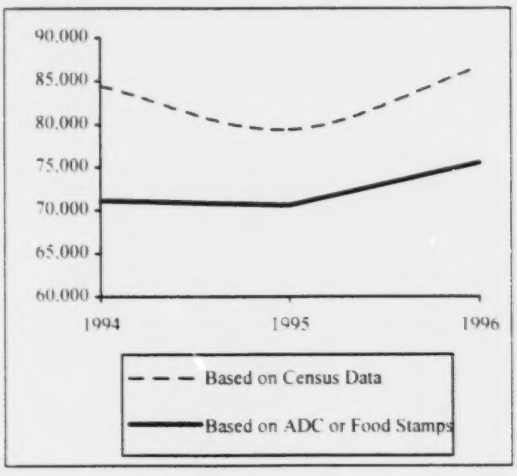
Using this proxy produces two problems in calculating the percent of the eligible population served by Head Start:

- The number of children receiving ADC or Food Stamps fluctuates from month to month. In 1994, for example, the number changed from 79,287 in March to 71,127 in October. Comparing these two months, the percent served would have increased eight points without enrolling any more children.

- Not all families in poverty receive public assistance, so the formula **undercounts** the number of eligible children. To determine just how many children may be left out of the current calculation, LOEO used census data provided by the Office of Strategic Research to estimate the number of children in poverty.

Exhibit 10 illustrates the potential gap between the number ODE is required to use as an estimate of children in poverty and the estimate based on census data. Over the last three years, the average undercount was 14%, which translates into an **average overestimate of the percent served of about 10%.** For fiscal year 1997, the overestimate is 12%.

Exhibit 10
Estimates of 3 and 4 Year Olds in Poverty



The overestimate is even higher if the numerator of the calculation is also questioned. That is, ODE uses the number of children *funded* as the number of children *served*. The children who actually enroll in Head Start are less than the number funded. For example, in 1995 the PIR data showed an average enrollment across grantees of 94% of those funded. If this actual enrollment figure were used, the percent of eligible served would be even less.

In sum, ODE has not yet developed the monitoring capacity necessary for effective oversight of a constantly expanding Head Start. Without oversight, there is no assurance that all grantees are implementing the program with enough quality to bring about the expected impact. Furthermore, ODE does not collect information on the program's impact on children and families.

CHAPTER V

FUTURE EXPANSION OF HEAD START IN OHIO

Welfare reform is affecting the families in poverty that Head Start currently serves. Given Ohio's concurrent policy goals of having children enter school ready to learn and helping their parents work, this chapter considers the future expansion of Head Start in light of the needs of families for full-day and full-year child care.

Welfare reform

Federal. Entitled "Temporary Assistance to Needy Families" (TANF), the 1996 federal welfare reform law puts new conditions on individuals and states to receive federal funds.

Individuals are limited to a lifetime total of five years of public assistance. For families, at least one parent must be employed or enrolled in an education or training program for a minimum of 20 hours per week during fiscal year 1997. This increases to 30 hours per week by the year 2002. TANF exempts families with children **under age one** from these requirements.

For states, TANF requires that at least 25% of the recipients of public assistance must be employed or enrolled in an education or training program during fiscal year 1997. This requirement increases to 50% by the year 2002. Exhibit 11 shows the TANF requirements for single-parent families.

Exhibit 11
TANF Requirements for Single-Parent Families

Fiscal year	Percent who must work	Hours per week
1997	25%	20
1998	30%	20
1999	35%	25
2000	40%	30
2001	45%	30
2002	50%	30

The requirements for two-parent families are more stringent. To receive public assistance, TANF requires that one parent work in 75% of two-parent families. This requirement jumps to 90% by 1999.

State. The Ohio General Assembly passed its welfare reform legislation in May 1996. Amended Substitute House Bill 167, entitled Ohio First, limits benefits to three years in any five-year period and currently exempts families with children **under age four** from its work, education, and job training requirements. Ohio is considering changing this exemption in April 1997 to families with children **under age one.**

If Ohio mirrors the federal requirement by only exempting families with children under age one, the number of children needing child care will substantially increase. The cost of this care will also increase because of the additional facility, equipment, sanitation, and staff requirements to care for toddlers in diapers. These children may also have older siblings who would need after-school care.

Children needing full time care

Of the 54,628 three and four year old children currently served by Head Start, most are in half-day programs for 139 days per year. Of these, we know that at least 900 are also receiving licensed child care for the remainder of the day and year through the Head Start/JOBS Collaboration.

In addition, Head Start grantees report that they make arrangements to connect Head

Start children with other child care providers for a portion of the day. The exact number of Head Start children in these arrangements is not known. What is known, however, is that to fulfill the requirements of federal and state welfare reform legislation, many more families in poverty will need child care for at least eight hours per day, 264 days per year.

The welfare reform requirements for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 translate into 26,000 and 31,000 three and four year olds needing full-day full-year care so their parents can work.

Barriers to expanding Head Start

Head Start could help fill this need for additional child care. To do so, however, it must overcome some barriers. Exhibit 12 lists the barriers Head Start grantees identified during interviews with LOEO.

Exhibit 12
Barriers to Head Start Expansion

Barriers	Percent
Finding adequate facilities	76%
Expanding too rapidly to maintain program quality	59%
Eligible families do not desire Head Start services	59%
Difficulty finding eligible families	57%
Competition for children	54%
Finding qualified teachers and other staff	50%

As noted, finding facilities is the most prominent barrier to expansion. In addition, some Head Start agencies are having difficulty recruiting the children they are funded to serve for several reasons: virtually all eligible children are being served by Head Start; families are being served by other providers; or families do not want government services.

Grantees describe families who need full-day care and are not able to obtain it through Head Start. As a result, these families forgo both the program's comprehensive services and its classroom activities to obtain full-day child care from other providers.

However, most Head Start grantees (76%) expect welfare reform to increase the need for Head Start services to eligible families. Exhibit 13 lists the services grantees would like to provide.

Exhibit 13
Services Grantees Would Like to Provide to Families Affected by Welfare Reform

Services	Percent
Full-day full-year Head Start	94%
Combine Head Start and child care services	83%
Nontraditional hours (evenings, weekends)	80%
Services to younger siblings	77%
Collaborations with other providers	74%

Grantees' desire to serve children all day conflicts with the current Ohio funding requirement that links expansion dollars to serving **more** children. In effect, Ohio's expansion goal conflicts with the need for full-day care for existing children.

To serve more children for more hours Head Start services must be offered in combination with child care. Sometimes these hours will be in the evening and on weekends, given the nature of the jobs available to their parents.

There are several ways state policy makers can think about providing full-day full-year child care for families affected by welfare reform. Exhibit 14 describes six different child care options, the services each option is required to provide, and LOEO's estimates of its annual cost per child. Appendix I explains how LOEO calculated the annual per-child costs.

Exhibit 14
Required Services and Estimated Costs of Six Child Care Options

Requirements	Half-day Head Start/ half-day licensed child care	Full day Head Start	High quality child care center[a]	Licensed child care center[b]	Licensed in-home care	Unregulated care
Annual cost per child[c]	$7,915	$7,823	$5,511	$4,376	$4,128	$3,406
Physical safety	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Low staff - child ratio	Yes & No[d]	Yes (2:17)	Yes (1:8)	No (1:14)	Yes (1:7)	No
Prepare child to enter school "ready to learn" including social competence	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Trained staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Provide speech and other disability therapy	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Medical screening, follow-up, and immunizations	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Arrange or provide dental care	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Provide nutritious meal	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Periodic home visits	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Connect parents to job, GED, or literacy training	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Family needs assessment	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Transportation usually provided	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Social services for family	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Parenting skills education	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Parent participation in policy making	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

[a] Similar to accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
[b] Meeting minimum standards
[c] Based on 40 hours per week
[d] Yes for Head Start portion (2:17); No for child care portion (1:14)

Recommended child care options

Of the six options displayed in Exhibit 14, LOEO believes half-day Head Start combined with half-day licensed child care *or* full-day Head Start are the options most likely to accomplish Ohio's concurrent policy goals of having all children enter school ready to learn and their parents enter the workforce. The annual per-child costs of providing these options are **$7,915** and **$7,823** respectively.

Although these are the most expensive options, they are the only ones that ensure the child's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development as well as provide comprehensive services to families in poverty.

Existing levels of public funding cannot pay for both child care and Head Start for all families affected by welfare reform. If Head Start is going to meet the needs of these working families, ways to reduce costs must be found.

Reducing costs

The LOEO estimate of an annual $7,915 per child for offering Head Start in combination with child care centers assumes the child is receiving Head Start services in one location and being transported to another location for child care. This may explain why the cost of providing full-day services in two facilities ($7,915) is greater than full-day Head Start in one ($7,823).

The practice of moving children also disrupts their care. The best arrangement is for young children to physically stay in the same place all day with the same caregiver. A more beneficial and cost-saving approach would be to offer Head Start and child care services in one location. This approach reduces the cost of facilities and transportation and offers continuity of care to three and four year olds.

In addition, offering Head Start services in combination with home providers addresses some of the facility shortages faced by many Ohio Head Start programs trying to expand. Ohio has an example of such a combination that might reduce costs -- the Head Start/JOBS Collaboration.

Head Start/JOBS Collaboration. The General Assembly set aside $12 million in the current biennium to provide full-day full-year Head Start and child care to eligible families who work or are in job training programs. Six million dollars are administered by the Ohio Department Education (ODE). The other $6 million is administered by the Ohio Department of Human Services (ODHS). Included in this funding are start-up dollars to help initiate collaboration across grantees and child care providers.

Participating grantees and child care providers give the full day of service in one location, allowing for continuity and quality of care. In some cases, the child care staff in the center or the home provide the education and nutrition components of Head Start as well as quality child care services.

In these instances the Head Start staff come to the center or home to provide the health, parent involvement, and social services to the child and family.

Grantees and the state administrators see benefits from the Head Start/JOBS Collaboration. One Head Start grantee identified four advantages of collaborating with home providers:

- It is the most cost-effective approach;
- It helps to develop the skills of family day care workers;
- It helps to provide an arrangement that is flexible for parents; and
- It provides quality care in one location.

To illustrate, this Head Start grantee gave playground equipment to one home provider and trained all the providers on child development and Head Start performance standards on a monthly basis. Many of the home providers are former Head Start parents and welfare recipients, so this training helps them become more self-sufficient.

The grantee described their agency as a "job training site," which agrees to employ the parents full time once their training has ended. This practice also helps the agency with staff turnover.

In fact, the Ohio Department of Human Services expects to rely heavily on home providers who are on public assistance to care for the children of other working families affected by welfare reform. One difficulty with this approach is that the home providers will not acquire marketable skills to use outside the home when their welfare benefits cease. If Head Start trains these providers and helps them obtain their Child Development Associate, providers will have more job opportunities in the future.

ODHS child care funding process

The $6 million set-aside in the ODHS budget is targeted for providing child care services to Head Start eligible children. Unfortunately, not all of this funding has gone toward this effort.

ODHS has merged this funding into the larger pool of child care dollars available for children of various ages. As a result, Head Start families must compete with the child care needs of all low-income families for this funding. For example, one grantee described how their county's child care dollars "ran out" in the middle of the month, leaving the Head Start family without child care services.

Unlike Head Start funding, which is allocated on a annual per-child basis, state child care funding is "reimbursed" on a monthly basis. Currently, ODHS only reimburses providers for the days children are at the center. If a child is absent, the center does not receive child care dollars for that day. With this type of reimbursement policy, hiring and retaining trained staff to provide the necessary continuity of services to children is virtually impossible.

In addition, Head Start eligibility is guaranteed for the entire year. However, families are only temporarily eligible for child care dollars. If the family income moves above the eligibility line during the year, parents lose their child care funding. The family is then forced to either find other funding or pay for less expensive services elsewhere. This lack of stable funding threatens the continued collaboration between Head Start and child care providers and the necessary continuity of care for children.

Some grantees mentioned that they rarely receive ODHS funding for the child care portion of the day. As a result, they used the one time start-up funds to obtain child care. This temporary solution does not fit the program's goals or the family needs.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LOEO concludes that Head Start is a viable program for helping Ohio's three and four year old children in poverty enter school ready to learn. To accomplish this policy goal in combination with the welfare reform goal of helping parents enter the work force, changes are needed in the implementation of Head Start in Ohio. Improvements are needed in the state funding process, the acquisition of facilities, collaboration efforts with other early childhood providers, and the Ohio Department of Education's oversight.

To address both policy goals, LOEO believes the best child care options are either full-day Head Start or a combination of Head Start and licensed child care. In this way, families living in poverty receive Head Start's comprehensive health and social services and children receive an education program that promotes their intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development as well as quality child care.

Additional Funding for Head Start and Child Care

Given the requirements of federal and state welfare reform, during fiscal years 1998 and 1999 approximately 26,000 and 31,000 Ohio three and four year olds will need full-day full-year care while their parents work. If Ohio wants children to be ready to learn when they enter school, children need quality early childhood experiences.

LOEO recommends:

- **The Ohio General Assembly support the Governor's proposal to provide additional funding for Ohio Head Start and for child care. These dollars should be accompanied by changes in the current funding process of both the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Human Services.**

ODE Funding Process

The Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) funding process needs more flexibility to respond to the specific needs of Head Start families and to encourage more collaboration with other child care providers to provide full-day full-year care. The majority of Ohio Head Start children (81%) are in half-day programs that meet part of the year. Presently, LOEO estimates that the annual cost of full-day full-year Head Start is $7,823 per child. The annual cost of providing Head Start in one location and then transporting a child to licensed child care in another setting is $7,915 per child.

The current Head Start/JOBS Collaboration may reveal a way to reduce these costs by co-locating Head Start in centers or the homes of child care providers. These arrangements have other benefits as well, including providing the same caregiver to the young child all day, improving the quality of child care, increasing the skills and future employment opportunities of providers, and reducing the need for new Head Start facilities.

Technically, Ohio law allows Head Start grantees to use new Head Start dollars for program improvement as well as start-up costs associated with program expansion. In practice, however, state expansion dollars focus on a single goal -- serving more eligible Head Start children. Currently, grantees must agree to serve an additional child for every $3,500 in expansion funds it receives from ODE. Head Start grantees need more flexibility to use expansion dollars in ways that suit the specific needs of the families they serve.

Ohio leads the nation in terms of percent of eligible Head Start children served, amount of state dollars, and commitment to Head Start and early childhood priorities. However, Ohio is not a leader in Head Start quality. Priority should be given to improving the quality of Head Start programs in Ohio.

LOEO recommends:

- **The Ohio General Assembly and ODE change the guidelines and methods for allocating the state's Head Start expansion funds. Grantees should be given greater flexibility by not requiring that all state expansion funding be tied to serving more children.**

- **Expansion funding be used to allow grantees to respond to the varying needs of children and families by giving grantees different per-child amounts depending on the mix of program options needed in their communities. In instances where grantees can document their need for full-day full-year Head Start for some portion of their Head Start children, ODE should have the flexibility to fund this option.**

- **Expansion dollars be used to fund incentives for initiating cost-saving ways of combining Head Start with licensed child care, both in centers and in the homes of providers. Head Start grantees and child care providers should jointly apply for these incentive funds. Priority should be given to proposals that serve children in the same location all day. For these arrangements, the direct costs of the Head Start services should be funded through ODE with either continuation or expansion grants. The cost of the child care services should be funded through ODHS. ODE should be responsible for examining these arrangements to see how costs have been reduced in order to advise future state budgets.**

- **ODE allow grantees to use expansion dollars to improve program quality, including staff salaries.**

- **ODE analyze the data currently available on the quality of individual grantees. Grantees falling below acceptable levels should be given technical assistance from ODE and not awarded expansion dollars except to improve the quality of their program.**

ODHS Funding Process

The Ohio Department of Human Service's (ODHS) current process for funding child care only reimburses providers for the days the children are actually in the center or the home. If a child is absent, the provider does not receive state dollars for that day. In addition, if family income increases during the year, the family loses their state child care funding. These policies make it impossible for a center to hire staff to be consistently available to the child. They also interfere with collaboration between Head Start and child care providers.

At least for its collaboration with Head Start, LOEO recommends:

- **ODHS switch to a funding mechanism that guarantees the child care provider stable funding, even for the days a child is absent.**
- **ODHS guarantee child care funding for an entire year for eligible working parents, regardless of whether their income moves above the eligibility guidelines during the year.**

Facilities

Finding adequate classroom facilities is identified by grantees as the largest barrier to serving more children. In addition to the recommendations listed below, a statewide campaign for community involvement in the location of Head Start facilities would be worthwhile. For example, corporations could be encouraged to "adopt" a Head Start and donate a facility (either within their workplace or in another building) in which Head Start and a licensed child care cooperate to provide children full-day care.

LOEO recommends:

- **The Ohio General Assembly accelerate the work of the Facility Approval Service Team (FAST) initiative as one way to change statutes and regulations to simplify the child care licensing process.**
- **The Ohio General Assembly continue to fund the technical assistance and facility planning grants provided by the Community Development Finance Fund (CDFF).**
- **ODE require grantees to use the resources and expertise available through CDFF, including the review of leases, loans, and facility projects prior to entering into agreements.**
- **As a priority, CDFF assist grantees who are currently using marginal and substandard facilities to relocate.**

Collaboration

For Ohio Head Start programs to meet the needs of working families in poverty, they must increase their collaboration with private day care, home providers, Public School Preschools, and other providers of early childhood care and services. In addition to the financial incentives recommended previously,

LOEO recommends:

- **The Ohio Department of Human Services, Ohio Department of Education, and Ohio Family and Children First identify any state or local agency operating rules and regulations that prevent collaboration among them and public, private, and nonprofit early childhood service providers. These rules and regulations should be compiled in a report to policy makers and include recommendations for required legislative changes.**

- **The Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) implement strategies to eliminate the turf battles which are preventing many OFCF local councils from effectively collaborating with Head Start. Such strategies should involve recognizing and endorsing effective local collaborations and including all major early childhood providers in local planning and program development efforts.**

ODE Oversight

The current state budget provides about $1.45 million in administrative funds for ODE to manage the grant process, monitor Head Start operations, and provide technical assistance to improve quality and assist in expansion planning. LOEO found problems with ODE's record keeping, information management, and program monitoring.

LOEO recommends:

- **The Ohio General Assembly require ODE to improve its capacity for record keeping and analysis in order to provide more complete, accurate, timely, and relevant information for program improvement and accountability.**

- **ODE modify state reporting forms to make them compatible with federal forms in order to analyze trends and make comparisons with the federally funded portions of Head Start.**

- **ODE upgrade its technology and build the expertise necessary to conduct on-going policy analysis. ODE could use LOEO's relational database as a starting point for building electronic files on costs, enrollments, and the status of Ohio's grantees.**

- **In addition to the current collection of data about processes, ODE require grantees to collect impact data as a condition for state funding. The Ohio General Assembly should require the use of a common instrument for evaluating program impact on children and families and direct ODE to analyze the data and report its findings.**

- **The Ohio General Assembly require schools to include records on the pre-kindergarten education experience of children in the Education Management Information System (EMIS). Further, LOEO recommends that ODE be required to periodically report on the comparative achievements of Head Start children as they progress in public schools.**

The current budget bill requires ODE to use the number of children in families "receiving ADC or Food Stamps" in its calculation of the percent of eligible children served by Head Start. ODE also uses funded enrollment rather than actual enrollment in its calculation. This approach inflates the percent of children served by underestimating the population of children in poverty and overestimating the number served.

LOEO recommends:

- **The Ohio General Assembly require ODE to use census data to calculate the eligible Head Start population. Further, ODE should use actual rather than funded enrollment when calculating the percent of eligible children served by Head Start.**

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Research on the Impact of Head Start

It is important to examine the research on the impact of Head Start because of the large number of disadvantaged children served in Ohio and nationwide. Moreover, public funds that support Head Start are significant and continue to expand. Knowing the extent to which positive outcomes for children, families, and communities can be attributed to Head Start will assist policymakers with planning and budgeting decisions, and with assessing the state's progress in preparing young children to start school.

Numerous studies on Head Start have been conducted, particularly on the short-term benefits to program participants. Fewer studies have attempted to measure the long-term impact of participation in Head Start. The Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) reviewed 16 studies of Head Start, other large-scale public programs, and model programs nominated by early childhood experts as the most important and credible research completed between 1969 and 1995.

There is considerable variability in the quality of the research associated with Head Start and other child development programs. Some technical problems involve: the ways in which the comparison groups were formed, the initial and follow-up sample sizes, and who was measured and how. The consistency of findings across these studies, however, serves to support, rather than negate, the research findings.

Summary of Head Start findings

The short-term effects of Head Start are well documented. Participation in Head Start produces substantial effects on IQ, academic readiness and achievement, and physical health, including better dental and nutritional status, greater immunization rates, and improved access to medical screening and services. These effects continue for two to four years (first through third grades), until little or no appreciable differences appear between Head Start participants and comparable children with no preschool experience.

Studies on the long-term impact of Head Start conclude that Head Start graduates are less likely to be retained in grade or to be placed in special education or remedial classes. Head Start graduates are more likely to meet the ordinary requirements of school, such as school attendance, and are more likely to graduate from high school. These studies also show that former Head Start participants have higher levels of social competence, self-esteem, and motivation to achieve.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the research on Head Start:

Children leave Head Start "ready to learn." All of the studies LOEO reviewed that collected data on cognitive and social development concluded that children who participated in Head Start were better prepared to begin school than comparable children who did not attend preschool.

The Synthesis Project (McKey, 1995), a meta-analysis conducted of over 200 studies of Head Start, found immediate positive effects of Head Start that lasted several years. The joint study by the Westinghouse Learning Corporation and Ohio University (1969), several studies using Head Start longitudinal data (Shipman, 1976 and Lee, 1990), and the National Household Education Survey (Zill, 1995) had similar findings.

The Synthesis Project also concluded that, while significant differences in scores on tests of intellectual performance faded over time, other positive effects of the program were sustained. The Consortium for Longitudinal Studies (1983), a research collaboration among 11 major programs, and the Barnett (1995) analysis of 36 studies, reported that significantly fewer program participants than non-participants were ever placed in special or remedial education and fewer were ever retained in grade. In the Chicago Experience (Fuerst, 1993) and the High/Scope Perry Preschool Project (Schweinhart, 1993) the program participants had a significantly higher graduation rate than the non-program group.

Success in the early primary grades motivates children to learn and stay in school. The Consortium for Longitudinal Studies found Head Start graduates had higher self-esteem and valued achievement more than children who did not attend preschool. Further, Head Start parents had higher occupational aspirations for their children than did the control parents.

The Synthesis Project also found former Head Start participants surpassed their non-Head Start peers in motivation to achieve. Similarly, the Philadelphia data (Copple, 1987) tell us Head Start participants more often avoided serious school problems. In the elementary grades they were retained less frequently and in later grades had better attendance rates and took tests more regularly. The High/Scope Perry Preschool Project reported changes in teacher and parent expectations that led to children's increased academic achievement and motivation, a factor shown to be directly associated with staying in school.

The abilities to understand what one hears and to accurately express one's thoughts are highly associated with academic achievement and staying in school. Both the Westinghouse study and the Lee analysis of the Head Start longitudinal data identified language development as an area of significant weakness for Head Start participants.

The High/Scope Perry Preschool Project emphasized the importance of a developmentally appropriate program that encourages active learning and allows children to solve their everyday intellectual, social, and physical problems and to achieve a greater sense of control over their environment.

Program quality is essential to producing and sustaining long-term results. Research on model, child development programs for disadvantaged children, like the High/Scope Perry Preschool Project and the Abecedarian Project (Campbell, 1994), shows program effects are greater and last longer than those for Head Start. Model programs are typically better funded than Head Start, often providing the means to extend the program to younger children or to extend the program more hours per day or more days per year.

Additional funds also enhance the quality of the caregiver-child relationship, the single most important factor in quality care, by keeping the child-staff ratio low and the education and training levels of the caregiver high.

The Westinghouse report stressed developing a child's capacity to learn over emphasizing specific subject-matter content in the curriculum. Similarly, the Consortium for Longitudinal Studies found that the specific curriculum used in the program was less important than the need for specific goals and some assurances that teachers can carry out the curriculum.

The quality of education received after preschool is also important to sustaining the cognitive and social gains achieved in Head Start. Lee concluded from the 1995 analysis of the National Educational Longitudinal Study that former Head Start students were educated in schools of significantly lower quality than students who attended other preschool programs or who did not attend preschool. Former Head Start participants attended schools with fewer academic resources, poorer overall academic achievement and that were less safe.

Head Start improves the parent-child relationship. Most of the Head Start research focuses on the effect on children. However, the Synthesis Project found that Head Start increased parental interaction and communication with children and increased parents' participation in later school programs. There is some evidence that Head Start improved parents' disciplinary practices and decreased parents' feelings of anxiety and depression.

Head Start improves the community's responsiveness to children from low-income families. Kirschner Associates in a 1970 study found that communities with Head Start programs placed a greater emphasis on the educational needs of poor children. These communities also modified health services to improve access and delivery. Both the Abt study (Fosburg, 1984) and the analysis of the data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (Currie, 1995) concluded that due to Head Start, children are gaining access to health care.

According to Kresh's 1993 report, Head Start has also positively impacted communities. Through its development of the Child Development Associate credential, Head Start has contributed to the quality and professionalism of early childhood staff. Also, through collaborations with other community institutions, Head Start promotes coordination of services and increases access to services for low-income families.

The research studies included in this review are listed together at the end of the bibliography in Appendix B.

APPENDIX B
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Appendix C

Current Status of the Recommendations from the 1993 Governor's Head Start Task Force

Recommendations for Quality, Monitoring, and Application Process

The Task Force made four overall recommendations:

1. ***Ohio Department of Education (ODE) conduct annual inspections of Head Start grantees.***

   ODE has implemented a three step review process. In year one, ODE staff accompany federal reviewers during the On-Site Program Review Instrument (OSPRI) review. If the grantee is determined to be "deficient" in compliance with the federal standards, a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is required. In year two, usually all year one grantees are revisited. For those grantees that were determined "deficient" the previous year, ODE reviews their progress toward implementing QIPs. For the other grantees, ODE follows up on the OSPRI review recommendations. In year three, the ODE visits focus on fiscal operations and property management of grantees.

2. ***ODE implement the provision in state law for corrective action plans.***

   Corrective action plans are now called "Quality Improvement Plans" (QIPs). If a grantee is determined "deficient" after the OSPRI review, they must submit a QIP. Deficiency is determined by the federal reviewers. The number of areas that are in "non-compliance" and the severity of the problems are considered in determining if a grantee is deficient. A grantee could have non-compliance areas but not be deficient. If deficiencies are not resolved within one year, the grantee is de-funded.

   Nine grantees were determined deficient in 1995 and submitted QIPs. Of these only one grantee was de-funded in 1996. In 1996, nine more grantees were determined deficient and submitted QIPs.

3. ***ODE publish annual reports on the status of Head Start expansion by program and by county.***

   The *State Head Start and Public School Preschool Continuation and Expansion Grants Report* was published in December of each year since 1994. The report, which breaks down the status of Head Start expansion by program and by county, was sent to the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the President of the Senate.

4. ***ODE begin implementing the provisions in state law that allows competitive bidding for Head Start services in counties where less than 50% of eligible children are served and where 20% or more of state Head Start funds are returned or unobligated.***

   As a direct result of implementing the new provisions, ODE has added three new Head Start grantees in Cuyahoga, Hamilton, and Mahoning counties. Each of these counties is now serving over 50% of the eligible Head Start population.

In addition, two more recommendations were made in response to suggestions from Head Start directors.

1. ***ODE simplify the grant application with a two-year plan for continuation and expansion.***

   Today, grantees submit a two-year application for continuation and expansion funds. Prior to the current biennium, ODE surveyed grantees on their capacity to expand. The survey responses were taken into consideration by ODE when it awarded expansion funds for the current biennium.

   Although the state's form is now closer in design to the federal grant application, the forms are still not fully compatible. These differences make it difficult to interpret how a grantee is implementing Head Start.

   Even though the application has been revised, the accuracy of the applications is questionable. While collecting information from the state grant applications, LOEO came across numerous applications with incorrect budget totals, incorrect numbers of authorized children, incorrect hours and program schedules, or incorrectly filled out salary schedules.

2. ***ODE implement a three-year phase in of uniformity in funding levels with federal Head Start grants.***

   Two biennia ago, ODE tried to bring all continuation awards up to a minimum level of $3,200 per child. However, ODE was limited in its appropriation and restricted in the budget bill from giving any grantee less than it had received in the previous year. As a result, not all grantees were able to reach this minimum level. Currently, state funding per child is about 30% less than the federal funding per child. The state's priority is to fund additional children, not match the federal level of funding.

Recommendations from Day Care Licensing and Building Approval Sub-group

The task force made eight recommendations regarding the licensing and approval of facilities:

1. ***ODE and ODHS secure the appropriate number of licensing staff needed to provide timely inspections and license new Head Start facilities.***

2. ***The Ohio Head Start Association develop a guide to licensing.***

3. ***ODHS and ODE develop a collaborative licensing procedure that is consistent between agencies and non-duplicative.***

4. ***The Board of Building Standards and the State Fire Marshal regularly attend Ohio Head Start Association meetings.***

5. ***Governor Voinovich send a letter to local building officials, fire inspectors, and licensing personnel explaining Ohio's commitment to early childhood programs and the need for timely inspections and technical assistance.***

6. ***ODE convene a training institute and invite Head Start and child care providers***

7. ***The Ohio Board of Building Standards develop and implement a required continuing education seminar for inspectors related specifically to building approval of child care facilities.***

8. ***The Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Factory and Building, establish an ombudsman to answer questions on building approval.***

According to ODE all the recommendations were either completed or are still being worked on. However, as the agencies began working on specific recommendations they realized that a holistic approach was needed. As one staff member to the Board of Building Standards put it, "the problem with licensing was the process itself and it did not make sense to put a band-aid around it for Head Start." For example, a guide to licensing was developed but it was of little use because the guide assumed all building departments were the same. The guide could not address differences in local processes.

In the fall of 1994, the Facility Approval Services Team (FAST), presented a proposal to the Governor's Cabinet Counsel for overhauling the regulatory process relating to facility approval. In the broadest sense, the FAST initiative has two components: legislation and locally designed customer service centers. Several pilot projects of the customer service centers are now in operation across the state while the other statutory, regulatory, procedural, and policy changes are being addressed.

There are three elements in the proposed model: customer service, certification and training, and uniform regulations. The cornerstone of the model is a "customer service center" where the applicants can come to a designated office and based on their needs, get a list of all the documents they must provide for their application to be processed. Once they submit the application, their subsequent contacts would be through the same office.

The second element, which focuses on certification and training, attempts to increase the incentive for cross disciplinary trained personnel, to improve the efficiency of the local jurisdictions, and raise the professionalism of those in enforcement. This is accomplished through required certification and continuing education approved by the Department of Commerce's Division of Industrial Compliance.

The final element of the FAST proposal strives for uniform regulations. It requires several changes to statutes to eliminate conflicting rules and assure future rule changes do not create new conflicts. It also proposes moving building approval authority from the Board of Building Standards to the Division of Industrial Compliance.

Recommendations for Facilities

The facilities sub-group made five very specific recommendations:

1. ***Hold a Head Start Facilities Development Conference to identify the opportunities available to meet facility needs.***

   This was a one-time event. Representatives from three financial institutions shared what financing options they had available. Representatives from the Ohio Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MR/DD) also talked about how they have access to capital dollars during the conference. As a result, some Head Start grantees have formed collaborations with local boards of MR/DD to share facilities.

2. ***ODE shall incorporate technical assistance and training on facilities issues in the plan for use of the one percent Management Assistance funds.***

   Technical assistance and training is now provided through a contract with the Community Development Finance Fund (CDFF). As of December 1996, 49 of 56 grantees (88%) have used CDFF for technical assistance.

3. ***Establish an ongoing Head Start Facilities Committee to seek new partners in addressing Head Start facility needs and to identify additional funding strategies.***

   This committee continues to meet periodically and was instrumental in solidifying the relationship between the Head Start community and the Community Development Finance Fund.

4. ***ODE will establish a facilities planning grant initiative using FY 1994 and FY 1995 funds.***

   CDFF received $328,000 in fiscal years 1994 and 1995 and $300,000 in fiscal years 1996 and 1997 from ODE for planning grants. As of December 1996, 33 of 56 grantees (59%) have applied for and received planning grants.

5. ***The Governor, in consultation with leadership of the Ohio General Assembly, will seek legislative authority for facility development and financing using a portion of the FY 1995 Head Start appropriation. Leveraging private-sector funds will be one goal of this legislation.***

   In February of 1996, the Ohio Nonprofit Facilities Fund (ONFF) was established with $3 million with a goal of leveraging an additional $10 million in private-sector funds for Head Start facility development. As of December 1996, the ONFF has leveraged roughly $650,000. However, there are 19 projects in the pre-development stage which could use the ONFF for linked deposits or loan guarantees.

APPENDIX D

Head Start Staff Training Activities

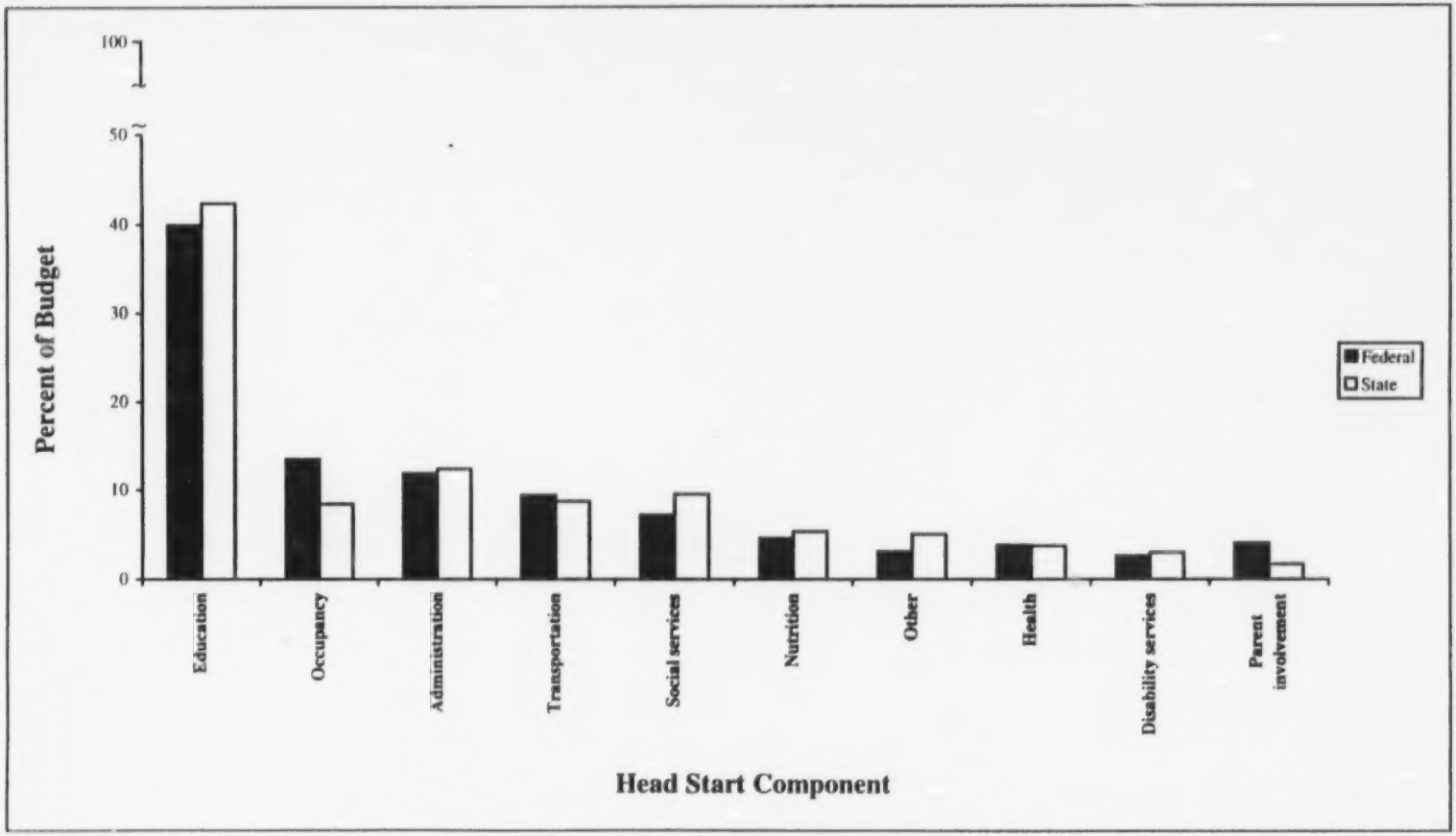
The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has initiated several training and professional development initiatives since 1994. Using the one percent management assistance set-aside, ODE has provided grants to the Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies, the Ohio Urban Resources System, Inc., the Ohio Head Start Association, Inc., and the Ohio Quality First initiative to:

- help Community Action Agencies advance the Head Start goals of anti-poverty and economic self-sufficiency;
- provide Head Start grantees in large urban areas with strategic planning skills and ways to enroll as many eligible children as possible;
- provide training for Head Start directors and Community Action Agency executive directors;
- conduct Head Start management academies;
- coordinate with colleges and universities to help Head Start staff obtain the required Child Development Associate credential for teachers and the Family Service Worker credential;
- improve career opportunities for all Head Start staff and the management and planning skills of administrators;
- support a Professional Development Specialist position within the Ohio Head Start Association;
- establish a Professional Development Advisory Committee; and
- create training manuals for Head Start staff on skill building and strategic planning.

Appendix E

Comparison of Federal and State Head Start Budgets in Ohio

FY 1996



APPENDIX F

Methods Of Calculating Per-Child Costs

Since all but one of Ohio's grantees receive both federal and state funding, LOEO computed a single "cost-per-child" that includes all state and federal resources and the children served by these grantees. LOEO used the dollars allocated to the grantee and the number of children for which the grantee received funding to calculate the "per-child amount." This figure is LOEO's proxy for the "cost" of Head Start. State and federal contributions were weighted according to their respective enrollment.

LOEO's per-child figure includes:

- federal dollars (base and training funds);
- federal in-kind;
- state continuation dollars;
- state expansion dollars; and
- state start-up dollars.

LOEO's per-child figure does not include:

- federal USDA dollars; and
- federal in-kind beyond the 20% required match.

Grantees typically exceed the 20% in-kind required by the federal government. Amounts above 20% are not recorded on the grant application and are not available to LOEO. Therefore, the $4,700 per-child amount underestimates the total dollars dedicated to operating Head Start programs in Ohio.

APPENDIX G

Selected Ohio Family and Children First Collaborative Projects

Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) has created an array of programs and initiatives that are designed to transform Ohio's social service system into one that is more flexible, preventive in its approach, comprehensive, family centered, and community based. The selected programs and initiatives are closely related to Head Start and the children and families it serves.

State Initiatives

- **Head Start/JOBS Collaboration.** Ohio is taking the lead nationally in combining Head Start programs with full-day JOBS child care programs. This partnership allows sites to provide children with full-day child care, including Head Start's educational and social services. Comprehensive care is located in both Head Start and child care centers, as well as home providers. The FY 96-97 budget allocated $6 million annually to provide full-day services, ensuring funding for up to 950 children.

- **Head Start Collaboration Project.** The Head Start Collaboration Project focuses on the development of a statewide structure to support the growth of Head Start in Ohio and enhance the delivery of services for Head Start children and other low-income children and families. The federally funded project focuses on furthering statewide collaboration in four areas:

  1. Expansion of quality Head Start and other early childhood programs, including birth to age three programs.
  2. School readiness through transition of children to public school.
  3. Services for children with disabilities.
  4. Welfare reform issues through linking with JOBS.

  The Head Start Collaboration project is federally funded and is managed by the Ohio Family and Children First initiative. Working with the Ohio Head Start Association on this project, OFCF develops working relationships with state agencies responsible for programs and services affecting Head Start children and families. It also identifies areas for collaboration and joint activities at the state and local level.

- **School Readiness Resource Centers.** The goal of School Readiness Resource Centers is to improve student achievement by ensuring that the health and social needs of all students are met so that they enter school ready to learn. The centers also ensure that schools are ready to provide for the learning, development, and well being of all children. The centers are school-linked (and located near schools) or school-based to ensure a continuum of comprehensive services to families of preschool and school age children served in public schools in urban areas. Beginning in 1997, each selected school district receives up to $300,000 for three centers located in or connected to elementary, middle, and high schools. Continuation funding is contingent upon upcoming state budget deliberations.

- **Wellness Block Grant.** In January 1997, more than $6 million was allocated to the 88 counties with OFCF local councils and the Department of Youth Services to reduce the teen pregnancy rate. To support the grant, funding was pooled from six state agencies: Departments of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, Education, Health, Human Services, Youth Services and the Children Trust Fund. Wellness Block Grants give OFCF local councils the flexibility to design strategies to prevent first and second pregnancies among teens. Funding includes one-time planning grants of $5,000 per county.

- **Earlier Prenatal Care and Increased Well-Care.** The initiative promotes early and consistent prenatal care. The percentage of women receiving prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy has increased 20% since the inception of the Initiative. Ohio Department of Health funds target local community projects that help identify pregnant women and secure early and continuous prenatal care and well-child care.

- **Drug Prevention with Head Start.** The Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services and Head Start provide drug prevention education to Head Start officials and to parents and children enrolled in Head Start.

- **Ohio Early Start.** Currently, children from birth to age three who are identified with developmental disabilities receive early intervention services. Ohio Early Start allows babies, toddlers, and their families who are identified with significant risk of abuse, neglect or future developmental delay to also receive services. A total of $8 million in federal and state funds served 2,000 children in FY 96 and approximately 4,000 in FY 97.

- **Immunization.** The number of fully immunized two-year-olds has increased from 51% since 1991 to 66% in 1996. The funding of $6.1 million in FY 96 and $7 million in FY 97 was expected to ensure basic childhood immunizations to an estimated 128,000 children annually. A statewide immunization recall and tracking system provides information and reminders to parents and medical providers. This system electronically stores a child's immunization history and is currently being piloted in various counties.

- **Help Me Grow.** This is a public/private partnership addressing the need for comprehensive prenatal/postnatal and well-baby care for expectant mothers and their babies. The "Help Me Grow" campaign involves a public education campaign, a wellness guide featuring incentives for health care visits and a comprehensive state helpline which provides information to families seeking local referrals or assistance. Primary corporate sponsors include Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, Kroger Food and Drug, McDonald's Restaurants, Nationwide Insurance, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Dayton-Hudson-Marshall Field's-Target Stores and Rite Aid Pharmacies.

- **GuardCare.** The initiative works with the Ohio Adjutant General to obtain federal approval for National Guard medical personnel to provide preventive health services in underserved areas. Through GuardCare, children receive immunizations, well-baby care, and dental care while guardsmen complete required training exercises. As of 1996, the Guard has administered 740 childhood series immunizations to more than 400 patients and performed more than 140 vision, hearing, dental, and physical screenings. In 1996, GuardCare targeted a medically-underserved area for two weekend events providing expanded preventive health services with coordinated follow-up with service providers.

- **Facility Approval Services Team (FAST) Initiative.** Complex licensing requirements and multiple facility inspections are discouraging and expensive to Ohioans operating child care centers, Head Start classrooms etc. A new public-use facility licensure model is being piloted in four local sites (Cincinnati, Toledo/Lucas County, Clermont County, Stark County) and legislation is prepared for consideration by the Ohio General Assembly. This new model consolidates and coordinates the facility licensure functions of seven state agencies.

- **LINCCS Computer Project.** The Linking Interagency Networks for Comprehensive Computer Systems project (LINCCS) is a cooperative effort between the Department of Health, the Department of Education, and the University of Cincinnati. It is funded for three years by a U. S. Department of Education grant. LINCCS connects computer systems that already exist in several state agencies, so that information about children from birth to age eight can be easily exchanged. At the state level, accurate aggregate data (without personal identifiers) will improve policy development, budget planning, accountability, service delivery design and evaluation. The privacy of individual children and families will be protected throughout the project.

- **Family Resource Centers.** In 1995, Ohio Family and Children First awarded $1.2 million to OFCF Family Resource Centers in 18 Ohio counties. Several different resource center approaches were funded, including centers that are school-linked, school-based, or mobile units. The 18 projects are located in Adams, Ashtabula, Athens, Belmont, Clark, Clermont, Delaware, Franklin, Greene, Lorain, Madison, Marion, Mahoning, Mercer, Ottawa, Shelby, Wayne, and Wyandot counties. Grants ranged between $50,000 and $90,000.

- **System Access.** The State of Ohio is taking the lead in developing a common data dictionary to be used by state and local child-serving agencies to reduce unnecessary and duplicative paperwork and/or computer work locally.

Local Initiatives

- **Service Coordination Plans.** Service Coordination Plans are designed to coordinate the activities of courts, schools, and social services around the needs of abused, neglected, dependent, delinquent, or unruly children. The plans feature binding local dispute resolution mechanisms. This mechanism helps ensure that children receive necessary services without their families or a local agency having to resort to court action. The Ohio General Assembly has now approved statewide implementation of binding Service Coordination Plans in all counties.

- **Inter-System Training.** Hamilton County is providing new employees of its education, health, and social service systems with information about all services available to families. Employees of non-profit providers are also participating in this orientation training. Lawrence County is providing cross-system training for support services to families, and training on the use of a new intake and referral process.

- **Streamlined Intake/Referral.** Ashtabula, Erie, Fairfield, Hamilton, Lawrence, Montgomery, Stark, the Hopewell region (a consortium of Adams, Brown, Clinton, Fayette, and Highland counties), and several other counties are piloting intake and referral systems which eliminate red tape, computerize cross-agency systems, and seek to make more appropriate referrals to families seeking services.

- **Mobile Early Childhood Unit.** Stark County now operates a mobile early childhood unit through its county Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Board. The mobile childhood unit brings screening and testing services to families. Stark County is also activating a health care outreach project focusing on at-risk pregnant women.

APPENDIX H

Federal and State Process for Monitoring Head Start Programs

Each Head Start grantee receives a federal review using the On-Site Program Review Instrument (OSPRI) once every three years. Until recently, it was very difficult for a grantee to lose federal funding as a result of these reviews, even if it has been out of compliance for several years. In 1994, federal law became more rigorous. Since then, one Ohio grantee has been defunded.

Ohio's monitoring process

Ohio statute requires the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to visit each grantee each year. These visits are on three year cycles:

- **Year one:** ODE staff accompany the federal OSPRI reviewers for the on-site visits to one third of the grantees. If the grantee is determined to be "deficient" in its compliance with the federal standards, a "Quality Improvement Plan" is required.

- **Year two:** All year-one grantees are revisited. For those grantees that were deficient in the previous year, ODE reviews their progress toward implementing the Quality Improvement Plan. For other grantees, ODE follows-up with OSPRI recommendations.

- **Year three:** These ODE visits focus on fiscal and property management operations.

In addition to the OSPRI review, every grantee must submit a Program Information Report (PIR) to the federal Head Start agency each year. The PIR has 31 indicators which report on such items as enrollment levels, class size, health screenings, parent involvement and teacher credentials. These indicators are listed at the end of this appendix.

The federal Head Start agency compiles PIR figures, computes averages for each state, and provides regional and national summaries back to each state and to each grantee. The summaries are also used to report to Congress. The feedback to the grantees allows them to compare their individual performance to state and national averages. State agencies, such as ODE, can also review state level averages in comparison to regional and national figures. ODE does not request the PIRs for individual grantees in Ohio.

Ohio's performance on PIR indicators

LOEO analyzed 15 of the PIR indicators identified by the 1993 Governor's Head Start Task Force as the most critical. We also compared Ohio's performance to national averages from 1990 to 1995 and examined whether performance levels were consistent across Ohio grantees using the 1995 data. We then compared these findings with the results from the OSPRI reviews.

Ohio's overall ratings are slightly higher than national averages. Specifically, Ohio PIR ratings are more favorable for 35% of the comparisons, less favorable for 15%, and no different on the remaining 50%.

For example, Ohio has consistently more favorable ratings on:

- percent of children screened for dental problems;
- percent of classroom teachers with the Child Development Associate credential;
- percent of children with disabilities receiving special services; and
- percentage of family needs assessments completed.

Ohio ratings are lower on:

- percentage of children receiving medical and dental treatment;
- percentage of timely replacement of children; and
- average daily attendance.

Performance Information Report (PIR)
List of Indicators

Percentage of children:

*1. medically screened
2. needing medical treatment.
*3. needing medical treatment, receiving treatment
*4. completing dental examinations
5. needing dental treatment
*6. needing dental treatment, receiving treatment
*7. with up to date immunizations
8. enrolled in Medicaid Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment
9. receiving Medicaid-paid medical treatment

*10. Child to staff ratio
11. Class size

Percentage of:

*12. classroom teachers with Child Development Associate (CDA)
*13. classroom staff with CDA, Early Childhood Education (ECE) credential, or both
14. home visitors with CDA, ECE, or both
15. teachers in CDA training (of education staff needing training)
16. classroom staff with at least one volunteer

*17. Staff - child ratio for home-based programs

Percentage of:

18. children enrolled less than three months
*19. timely replacement of children
20. multiple year enrollments
*21. full enrollment
22. average daily attendance
*23. children professionally diagnosed as disabled
*24. disabled children receiving special services
*25. families with needs assessments completed
26. families identified as needing social services
*27. families needing social services, receiving social services

28. Ratio of parent volunteers to total enrollment
29. Ratio of parent staff to total staff
30. Percentage of children who dropped out
31. Ratio of federal Head Start funded to total funded enrollment

* A critical indicator as identified by the 1993 Governor's Head Start Task Force

APPENDIX I

Methods of Calculating Full-day Full-year Child Care Costs

The estimated cost for providing six different full-year child care options are displayed below. These estimates assume a 40 hour week, 4.3 weeks per month, for a total of 2,064 hours per year. Consistent with the projections used by the Ohio Department of Human Services, LOEO assumes child care is needed for this amount of time.

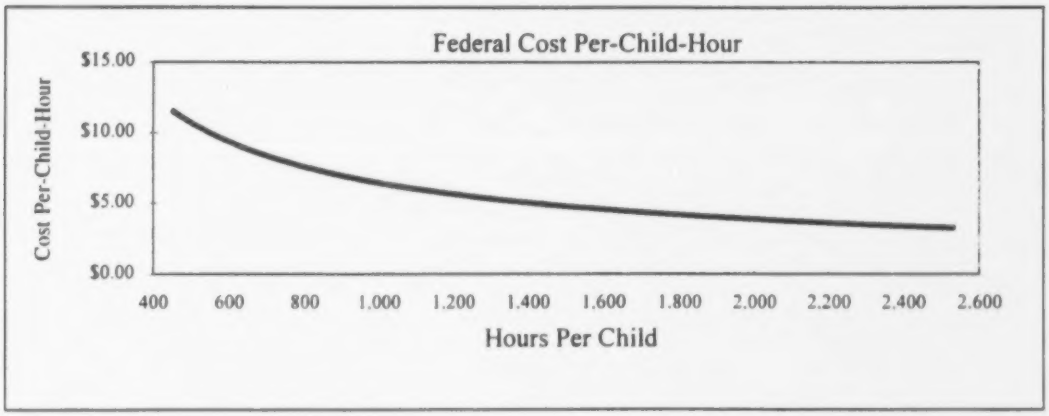
Child Care Option	Annual Cost Per Child
Half-day Head Start/half-day licensed child care center	$7,915
Full-day Head Start	$7,823
High quality child care [a]	$5,511
Licensed child care center [b]	$4,376
Licensed in-home care	$4,128
Unregulated child care	$3,406

[a] Similar to accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

[b] Meeting minimum standards

Head Start costs

Full-day full year. As noted in Chapter III, LOEO had only federal data available for some calculations. LOEO was able to calculate a per-child-hour cost for Head Start based on federal *part-day and full-day* costs for a portion of the year. We used this per-child-hour cost to project the cost of a *full-day full-year* Head Start program (2,064 hours). The hourly cost of Head Start services increases as the number of hours decreases. This relationship is illustrated in the graph below.



Half-day full-year. LOEO also projected the hourly cost of *half-day* Head Start over an entire year. This hourly cost was then multiplied by 903 hours for the Head Start portion of the year (17.5 hours a week, 4.3 weeks a month).

Child care costs

The cost of the child care portion of the day was determined by using the hourly rates published in the literature. The hourly rate was multiplied by the remaining hours in the year (1,161 of the 2,064). We added the child care and Head Start portions to arrive at a total cost for operating Head Start in combination with child care. Child care costs were taken from the following sources:

Jurs, S. G., Weis, S. J., & Hill, D. H. (1994, November). Ohio child care survey. Paper presented to The Ohio Program Evaluator's Group, Columbus, OH.

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (1995). Cost, quality, and child outcomes in child care centers. Washington, DC: Authors.

COMMENTS

Robert A. Gardner
18th Senate District

614-644-7718 (Columbus)
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Committees:
State & Local Government & Veterans Affairs,Vice Chairman
Economic Development, Technology & Aerospace
Education & Retirement
Energy, Natural Resources & Environment

Ohio Senate
Statehouse
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Report on the *Implementation of Head Start in Ohio*
April 3, 1997

Comments from Senator Robert A. Gardner

I am very proud of the fact that Ohio leads the nation in funding for the Head Start program, and I strongly believe that Governor Voinovich and the General Assembly should be commended for their commitment to early childhood programs. While I am new to the legislature, it is apparent to me that the policymakers clearly want to see every child enter school ready to learn. Having worked with at-risk students for more than twenty years, I cannot stress enough the importance of early intervention. Programs such as Head Start and public preschool reach out to children at a time when we can make valuable strides at shaping their development. We can teach them to be excited about learning; we can instill a sense of self-confidence; we can help them learn to interact with others. It is through these types of programs that I feel we can attempt to address many of the ills of society before they become problems.

I must compliment the staff of the Legislative Office on Education Oversight for recognizing that "quality Head Start programs are effective". I agree that quality Head Start programs can make a considerable difference in a child's life. I must also compliment the staff, however, on acknowledging that the programs are not perfect and that significant changes should be made to improve them. The concerns and recommendations outlined in this report reiterate much of my own research on the issue.

As I mentioned before, Ohio should be commended for its commitment to Head Start, but I strongly believe that the focus is misplaced. Ohio has consistently focused on the number of students served, but has neglected the fact that the quality of the programs may be lacking and varies dramatically across the state. I must repeat - "quality Head Start programs are effective." Early childhood programs cannot inoculate children from all of the problems with which they will be faced, but I believe that better quality programs will have longer lasting effects. Therefore, I would like to see changes in the funding process to allow grantees more flexibility in improving their programs.

I also agree with the need for better coordination between the various programs and child care services. While some grantees work very well with others in coordinating services, other grantees are confronted with turf battles. It is important, as we are urging

Serving: Ashtabula and Lake Counties

more people to go to work, that we look for ways to decrease the barriers to collaboration. The state may be able to play an important role by providing both financial incentives and disincentives for the coordination of services.

Another improvement that needs to be made is better oversight from the Department of Education. Through my own research, I have been told of programs that have filed reports with the Department of Education, which clearly show deficiencies in the program, yet the Department has not taken any recourse to fix the problem. I am also concerned that programs have filed false reports regarding the number of children served, yet no one follows up to see whether the numbers are accurate. I find it unacceptable that the Department would be unable to answer questions such as how many Head Start sites are in Ohio, how many children are being served in the various types of programs, and how many teachers Head Start employs statewide. I believe that better oversight is a key component to improving the quality and ensuring that the goals of the program are being met.

One recommendation that is not included in the report is the need to evaluate all of the components of Head Start. I believe that we should appraise the various services offered by Head Start to determine whether they should be continued. While I understand that Head Start is a comprehensive program that is designed to address more than just educational needs, I am concerned that the program is spreading itself too thin. Head Start is considered an anti-poverty program designed to help not only the children, but also the parents. Some programs assist parents in job training and GED preparation. While these programs are valuable, I am not sure that Head Start is the appropriate place or funding mechanism for these activities.

Another issue that I strongly feel should be considered deals with the certification of teachers. Currently Head Start teachers are only required to have a Child Development Associate (CDA), while public preschool teachers are required to have a bachelor degree. I am concerned with the difference in training levels. Children in Head Start are supposed to be those children most at-risk, yet they work with teachers who have the least amount of certification. While a degree does not necessarily make a person a good teacher, I am concerned that the lack of certification will allow anyone, regardless of whether they work well with children, to become a Head Start teacher. I believe this issue is worth further discussion.

I also feel compelled to mention that the observation, regarding one in five facilities being considered marginal or substandard, is based upon a self-evaluation conducted by Head Start grantees. All of the Head Start facilities currently meet state licensing requirements. While LOEO did visit seventeen of the "substandard" facilities and did conclude that improvements could be made, I do not believe we have an accurate picture of the state of facilities throughout Ohio. This should be an issue that is further explored.

Lastly, I believe some of the concerns and problems that have been brought to my attention stem not from the state level, but from the federal level. It is my understanding that the federal officials have even less oversight than the state and that the reporting forms, upon which the state bases its own, do not place enough emphasis on certain factors. I have been told that the federal forms consist of a lengthy checklist of items which must be evaluated. I am concerned that the same amount of weight is given to not having toothbrush covers, for example, as to not having enough children enrolled in the program. Therefore, I question how closely the state should model its reporting forms to the federal forms.

Overall, I found the report very informative, and it reaffirmed many of my own beliefs and views of Head Start. If we can develop programs that provide a stable environment for at-risk children, I strongly believe that we can make a serious impact on their development. I look forward to continuing the dialogue regarding early childhood programs.

HEAD START ASSOCIATION, INC.
Ohio

March 31, 1997

Nancy C. Zajano, Director
Legislative Office of
Education Oversight
77 South High Street - 22nd floor
Columbus, OH 43266-0927

Dear Nancy:

Please accept the Ohio Head Start Association response to the study of the implementation of Head Start.

We appreciate the opportunity extended us to respond to the study, and trust that our response will be taken in the spirit of making positive improvements in overall Head Start services in Ohio.

If I can provide any clarification or respond to questions, please don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely

Barbara Haxton
Executive Director

505 Windsor Park Drive • Dayton, Ohio 45459 • 513/435-1113 • Fax 513/435-5411

The following is in response to the LOEO report on the *Implementation of Head Start in Ohio* from the Ohio Head Start Association*. It should be noted that the Ohio Head Start community appreciates the opportunity to respond to the study and we do so in the spirit of making positive improvements in overall Head Start services in Ohio for the present and into the future.

AREAS OF AGREEMENT

In general, we found the report to be an accurate and realistic portrayal of Head Start service delivery, Head Start statistical data and Head Start program operations across the state. We noted, and applaud your statement on page 1 "*studies demonstrate that quality Head Start programs are effective.*" Further, we view the report as doing an effective job in outlining the many positive factors which make Head Start the successful program it is, while pointing out barriers which now face program management.

We noted, and agree with the many references which the report makes pointing out the comprehensive nature of Head Start services, as opposed to simple child care services and/or day care services. This is a critical factor in the overall value of Head Start services to families at risk, and is a factor often misunderstood by individuals who do not have an in-depth knowledge of the program and how it works. It is the *comprehensive* service delivery in Head Start which accounts for the success of the program and the ultimate successes which so many participating families have experienced.

The tables and charts which are included in the study provide graphic clarity to the various factors which they illustrate, and we found them to be succinct and useful in support of the overall points made in the study. We particularly support the chart on page 28 which very clearly illustrates the services necessary for quality early care, and the availability of such services throughout the state.

Your reporting of Ohio's low per child federal funding is an accurate depiction of a long time problem. Historically, Ohio has always been in the lower quadrant of all 56 federally funded Head Start entities, (50 states, Migrants, Native American, Puerto Rico, Washington, DC, the Pacific Rim, and the Virgin Islands) in dollars per child, even with federal increases in recent years. In as much as the state funding allocation was based in the beginning on our federal funding allocation, we continue to remain in the lowest 25% of all entities even when federal and state dollars are averaged. Despite our low dollar per child allocation, we remain among the top five in numbers of children served, and in federal funding, and as you noted, we lead all states in state contribution to Head Start.

The dollar allocation per child is the basis for ensuring quality services. Ohio Head Start programs have been diligent over the years to provide the highest quality services possible on with limited resources. This task has now become significantly more challenging with the changing face of poverty and the growing changes in the needs of children and families. The report does an excellent job in pointing out that today's Head Start families face far greater challenges than those of 30 years ago, and the complexities of these challenges require an upgraded program and staff. We support your contention that current levels of funding are inadequate for quality expansion.

We appreciate the emphasis on the quality ingredients necessary in an early childhood program which focuses on getting children ready for school and later life, and it is our hope that those who read the document will understand the critical nature of this fact. Now, more than ever, quality services are essential as we serve families involved in welfare reform.

Ensuring consistent relationships with caring adults, quality classroom activities, nutritious meals in a nurturing setting and a generally supportive, enabling environment is a challenge to which Head Start programs have risen successfully for the past 30 years. Head Start has long recognized the critical ingredients for quality early childhood programs and has made consistent efforts to reach and exceed these goals.

The study speaks realistically about the growing need for quality facilities. Given the rapid and substantial growth in Ohio programs over the past six years, adequate, quality facilities are at a premium. This is, and has been clearly a Head Start management challenge and whatever support there may be available from both state and federal sources is appropriate and necessary.

Recent changes in Head Start regulations regarding facilities renovation and ownership have served as an impetus to local programs to begin the process of replacing undesirable locations and mediocre surroundings. There has been neither sufficient time nor financial support to upgrade our facilities to the high quality level we strive to achieve, however Head Start programs are very sensitive to these needs and are, almost to a program, in an ongoing process of facilities expansion and upgrade.

The study's focus on the low level of pay which Head Start programs are able to provide employees is another area where Head Start program management faces an ongoing dilemma. We are continually challenged to upgrade the professional achievements of staff either by hiring more professional staff or by providing educational opportunities toward individual professional development. Significant time and effort has been spent over the past six years in providing high level management training and leadership development for Head Start programs in an effort to develop leaders who have the capacity to deal with these ever increasing challenges in program operation.

References to the federal, and likewise, state, monitoring process points out the rigor with which Head Start programs are evaluated, and held to meeting standards. Few such programs are required to meet such high standards over a sustained period of time. It is in the interest of all Head Start programs that each Head Start program meets and exceeds the standards, and the increased requirements laid down by the Head Start Bureau in Washington, DC push us to step up our attention to requirements.

The Head Start community feels it is of particular importance that references to collaboration be noted, as we move into a time when creating partnerships between child care programs and Head Start is critical. The barriers listed on page 21 of the study are highly significant and will require an ongoing effort between and among all partners to overcome. Overcoming the barriers will be essential to the successful provision of full day early care and education to families in Ohio. It is of particular concern that funding and reimbursement rates be stable and predictable.

SUPPORT FOR LOEO RECOMMENDATIONS

Our review strongly supports the recommendations made in the report, specifically:

- We support appropriate changes in both ODE and ODHS funding processes so that the partnering between Head Start and child care programs can proceed successfully.

- We support statewide support for, regulations which will allow for, and the necessary funding to achieve the best child care options for quality child care to families living in poverty - those which the report supports.

- We support quality improvement for Head Start programs, following the patterns which have been set with federal funding

- We support program options which will allow local grantees to provide full day care, if their community assessment dictates that need.

- We support Head Start/child care partnerships. Many programs already engage in such relationships. We recognize, however, the *importance of seeing that these partnerships are driven by the local Head Start program* because it is the Head Start program which has to meet all the regulations.

- We support recommendations for ODHS funding as it relates to Head Start child care partnerships.

- We support diligent monitoring of grantees which fall below acceptable levels and whatever measures of sanction necessary to bring them into full compliance and quality operation.

- We support the recommendation to accelerate the work of the FAST team initiative to simplify the child care licensing procedures.

- We support an ongoing partnership with the Community Development Finance Fund, including the continued funding of necessary grants to both sustain the work they do, and add to the base of leveragable funding, so that current facility deficiencies can be appropriately corrected and future expansion needs can be managed smoothly. The work of CDFF has been, and will continue to be, of enormous importance and guidance in Head Start expansion efforts. It is worth noting that the current biennial budget provides a set-aside for facilities financing, while the proposed budget does not. We encourage the inclusion of the additional set aside funding in the next biennial budget.

- We support the idea that the Ohio Family and Children First initiative improve efforts to reduce turf battles, and foster efforts to recognize Head Start as a very important and contributing partner in local councils.

- We support whatever changes in oversight are necessary so that Head Start is recognized as one of the most essential elements in the success of at risk children and families reaching the mainstream. We will work in concert with ODE in that process.

AREAS OF QUESTIONS AND/OR CONCERN

While, for the most part, we found the report an objective assessment of the status of Head Start in Ohio, there were some areas with which we took exception, or had questions. They are highlighted below and we hope, that by raising these questions/concerns, the reader will be encouraged to seek more information about these areas.

- It is our understanding that current regulations require Public School Preschools to meet all services outlined in the Head Start Performance Standards, and not those "consistent with most Head Start standards." (page 9)

- Ohio's set-aside for management assistance has not, to our knowledge, supplanted federal training resources, but has, in fact, enhanced our ability to provide additional and necessary high level management training across the state. (page 13)

- It should be noted that the chart which defines the condition of Head Start facilities in Ohio as 81% satisfactory, 16% as marginal and 3% as substandard is a reflection of a self assessment by grantees, and not by an official licensing process. (page 16) It is critical to understand that all Head Start facilities in Ohio meet state health and safety standards, and are licensed either by the Ohio Department of Human Services or the Ohio Department of Education. While many Head Start facilities may very well be inadequate for desired high quality operations, they do meet standards. The term substandard used on pages 16 and 17 imply space that is not licensable or below what is allowed by state regulations, and that simply is not the case. Head Start classrooms must be licensed by the state.

- It is our understanding that the current agreement regarding the use of CDFF facilities planning grants, requires CDFF approval prior to the grantee making a commitment for facility renovation or purchase. Any deviance from this process is clearly the failure of local program management to follow the prescribed process and not that of CDFF or the Department of Education oversight.

- Reference on page 18 to a "one year Child Development Associate" is misleading. To our knowledge, achieving completion of the CDA credential is a two year process, including minimum requirements for completion of some college level courses as a part of the process.

- It should be noted that we question the accuracy of the references to a high level of satisfaction with the local councils of the Ohio Family and Children First Initiative. The Ohio Head Start Association hosts regular meetings with the Head Start representatives to local councils, and feedback about the success of local council collaboration is very mixed. Our feedback has shown most representatives give their councils a mediocre to moderate rating on successful collaboration, and many programs who serve in more than one county report very differing activities in each county, reflecting a range of poor to high activities across the state. Our belief is that the Ohio Family and Children First Councils have a valid, if not noble mission, but there is much work left to be done in making them highly effective.

- References to Ohio Head Start quality as referenced in the PIR reports imply that some ratings are low, while all ratings are slightly higher than national averages. It should be noted that where the data collected is measured against a 100% achievement , the average achievements in Ohio were well into the 80th percentile or above.

- We would like the record to reflect that, while the report questions ODE oversight of Head Start in Ohio, the Head Start community has very high regard for the Ohio Department of Education, the staff and the processes with which the Department administers oversight of programs. We value the partnership which we has been developed and nurtured since the beginning of state funding for Head Start. It should be noted that staffing at the Department is limited for reasons beyond their control, and with the ongoing growth of the program, along with federally driven program changes (Welfare reform, revised standards, child care partnerships, etc.) work challenges have expanded even further. As we continue to grow and to meet the challenges facing us, we need to maintain and foster the good working relationship which currently exists between the Department and local Head Start grantees. The Head Start community is willing to do whatever necessary to make this partnership successful and exemplary.

- There are several comments in the Appendices which we question:

- Appendix D -

- The Ohio Head Start Association has received a number of grants over the past six years from ODE to provide high quality training and support for Head Start programs. The Head Start community has benefited greatly from this support and from the training which has resulted. These funds have not, however provided support for a Professional Development Specialist in the OHSAI office. That position is funded fully by the federal regional office.

- Appendix G

- It is our understanding the Head Start/JOBS collaboration was an effort between ODHS and ODE. We are not clear on the relationship to OFCF.

- Statements regarding the Head Start Collaboration Project as being a part of OFCF are very confusing to the Head Start community. The Head Start Collaboration Project is funded by the Head Start Bureau, and has historically been a partnership (since 1990) between the Ohio Head Start Association and the Office of the Governor. By virtue of the federal guidance outlining the project, decisions regarding the placement of the project, the overall governance of the project and the staff working with the project must be done jointly with the Head Start community. *To our knowledge, no joint decision to place the Head Start Collaboration Project under the management of Ohio Family and Children First initiative has ever been made. The possibility has never even been discussed with the Head Start Association.*

  The Head Start Collaboration Project has worked in concert with Ohio Family and Children First (in fact, work of the Project was instrumental in the development of Ohio Family and Children First initiative), however there is not, currently , a satisfactory, formalized working relationship between the Head Start community and the office of Ohio Family and Children First.

* The Ohio Head Start Association response is a reflection of the opinions of key members of the Association Board of Directors and key representatives for Head Start grantees.

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LOEO RESPONSE

The Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO) appreciates the thoughtful comments of the Ohio Head Start Association, Inc. (OHSAI). The following points address OHSAI's questions and areas of concern:

- Public School Preschools do not and cannot meet *all* of the Head Start performance standards. For example, the standards requiring the Policy Council to approve or disapprove hiring and firing decisions is legally inconsistent with the prerogatives of a local school board.

- LOEO's wording about Ohio's set-aside for management assistance is that these funds "*...help reduce* the level of federal training resource ...", not *supplant* them as expressed in the OHSAI comments. We were told this by the federal administrator of Region V.

- LOEO recognizes that all Head Start facilities must meet the minimum licensing requirements established by the state. However, when asked by the Community Development Finance Fund (CDFF) to rate their facilities, grantees identified those which they believed to be "substandard" despite meeting licensing requirements. The results of the CDFF survey are presented on page 16 of the LOEO report.

- Grantees are required to have their plans reviewed by the Community Development Finance Fund (CDFF) only if they receive funds from CDFF, such as planning grants or moneys from the Ohio Nonprofit Facilities Fund. However, the Ohio Department of Education encourages but does not require grantees to use the expertise of CDFF when requesting funds for facility projects from other sources, such as expansion start-up funds.

- The *National Head Start Bulletin* (Issue #46, p. 8) states that a Child Development Associate is "...a *one year* training and assessment program...".

- LOEO reports grantees' experiences with local Ohio Family and Children First councils under the heading of "mixed results" regarding collaboration. As noted on page 20, 63% of the Head Start grantees agreed that the Ohio Family and Children First councils were effective in furthering collaboration in their service area; 37% did not agree with this statement. Additional comments from LOEO site visits and telephone interviews expressed various plusses and minuses about the interactions with OFCF councils.

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- It is correct that in general Ohio's Program Information Report (PIR) averages were slightly above national averages. Of the comparisons made between state and national averages, 50% were the same, 35% were above, and 15% were below. It cannot be said, however, that "*all* ratings are slightly higher than national averages" as OHSAI states. The OHSAI statement that Ohio PIR achievements were at or above 80% does not mean that such state averages were above national averages. For many indicators, a PIR of 80% is well below the national average.

- In its March 1996 report, *A Record of Results Toward School Readiness,* Ohio Family and Children First (OFCF) lists the Head Start/JOBS partnership as one of the successful collaborative initiatives fostered by OFCF.

- A September 1996 case study about the Head Start Collaboration Project clearly presents the project as being an important part of OFCF. From this report, as well as interviews with current and former directors of the project, LOEO has listed this project "as part of" the OFCF initiative. We did not wish to imply, however, that the prerogatives for managing the project reside fully within the administrative structure of OFCF.